WISDOM

THE MAGAZINE OF KNOWLEDGE FOR LIFETIME LEARNING AND EDUCATION

EDUCATORS HUTCHINS, BENTON, ADLER

LIMITED EDITION

WISDOM OF THE GREAT BOOKS OF THE WESTERN WORLD

AND OTHER TIMELESS ARTICLES MAGNIFICENTLY ILLUSTRATED

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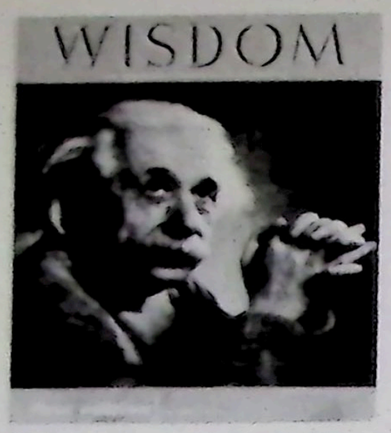

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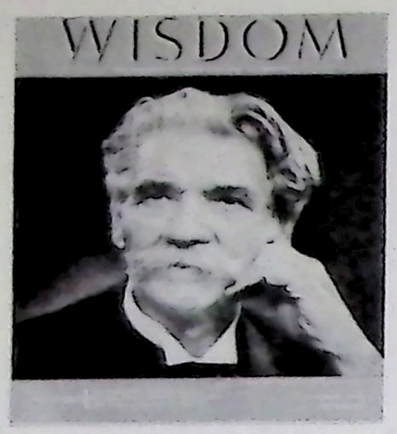

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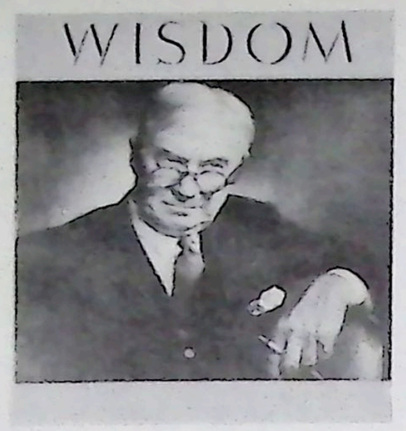

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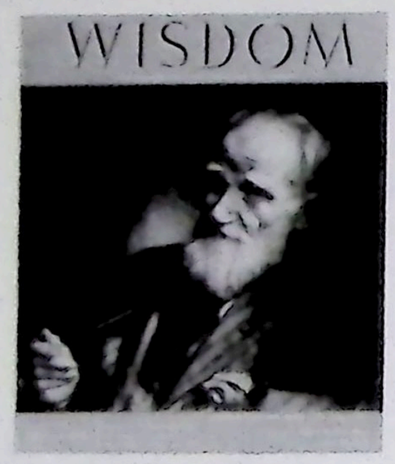

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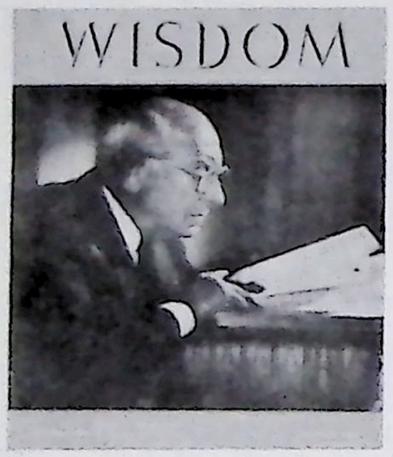

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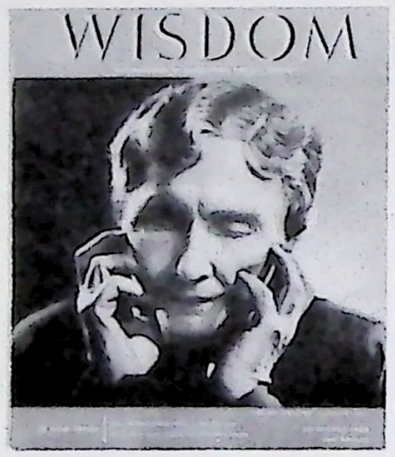

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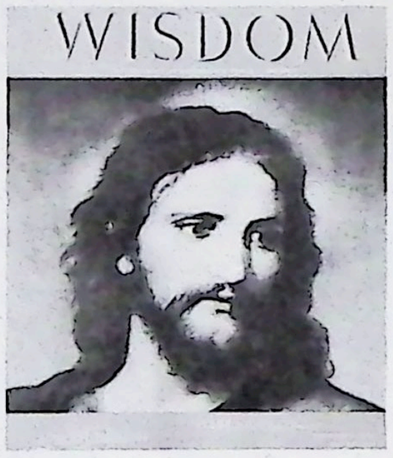

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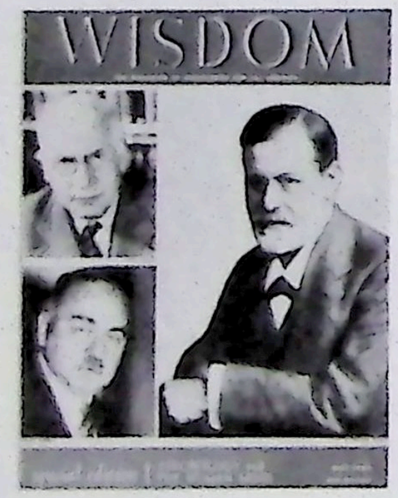

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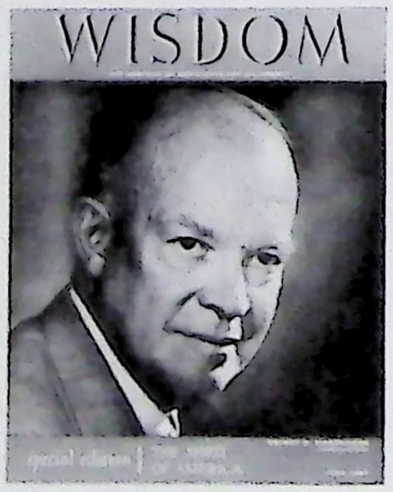

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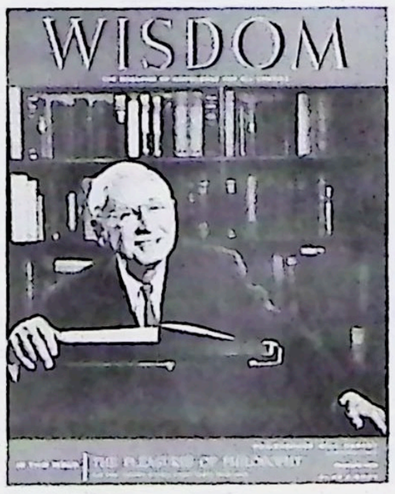

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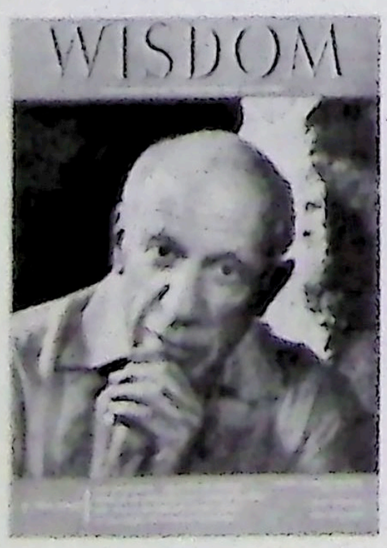

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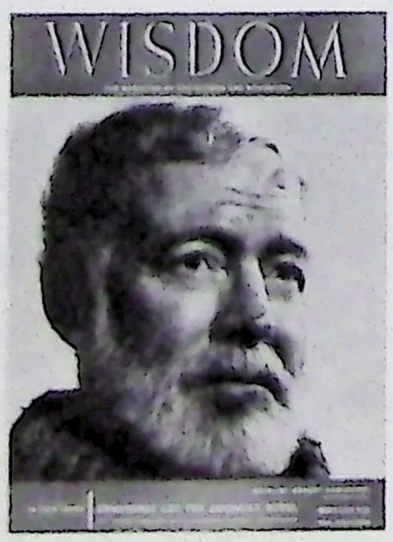

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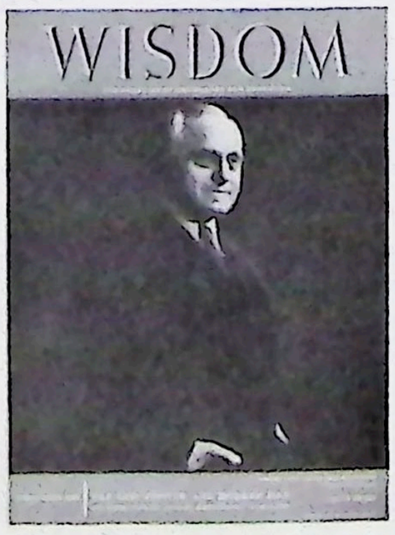

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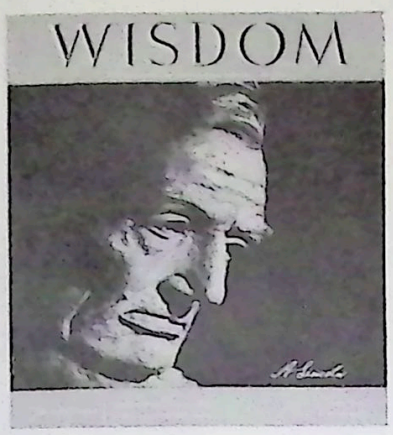

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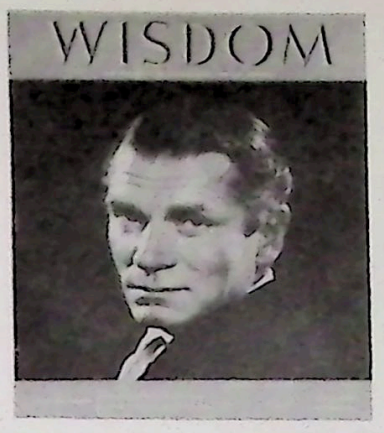

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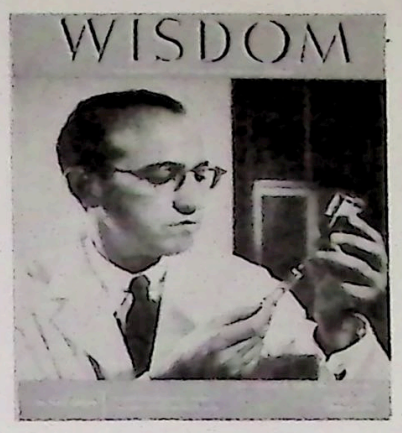

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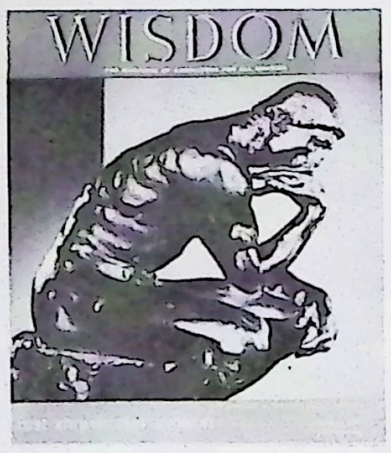

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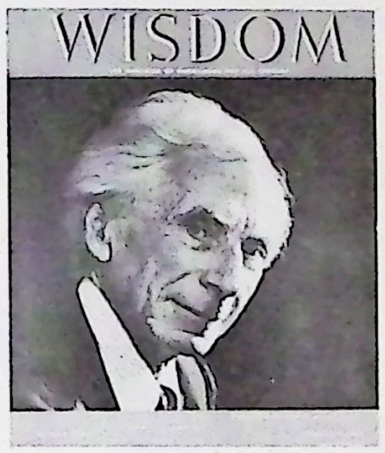

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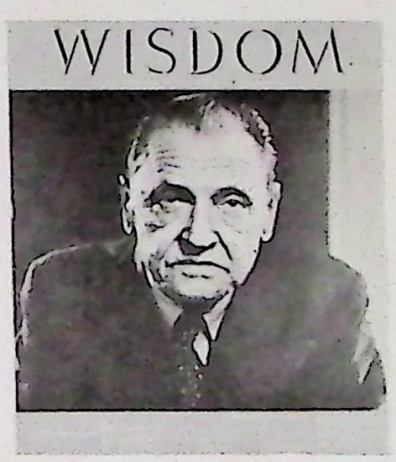

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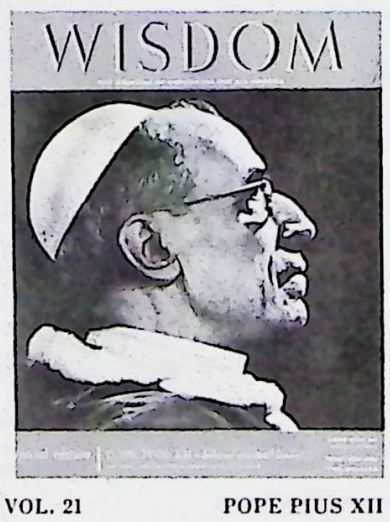

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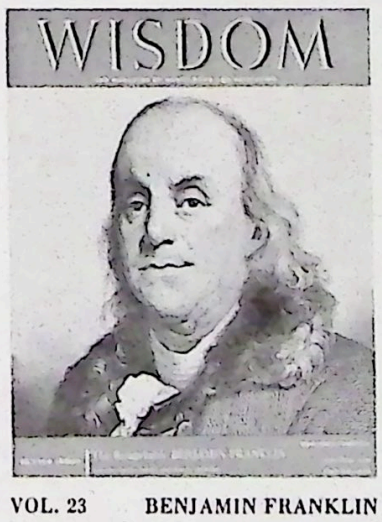

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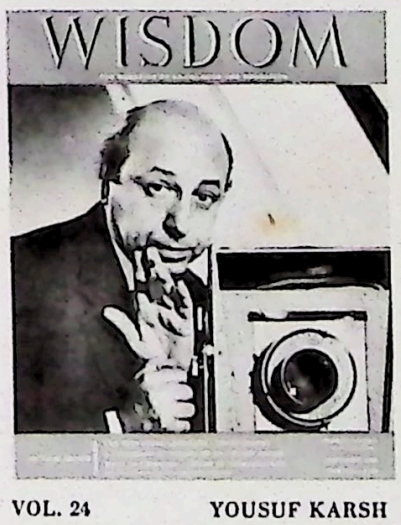

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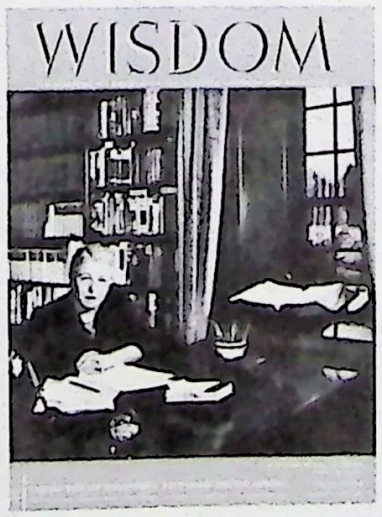

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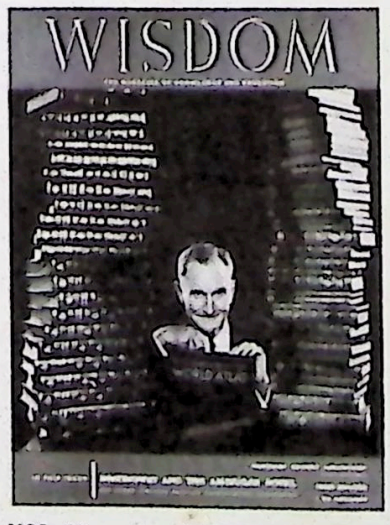

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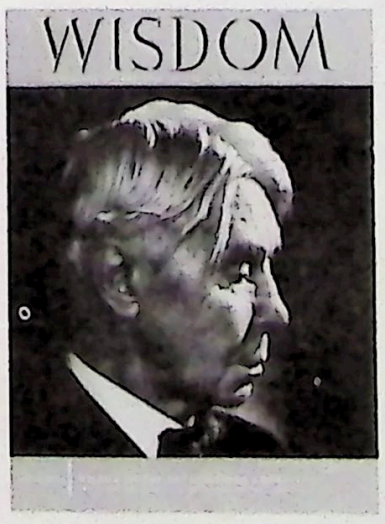

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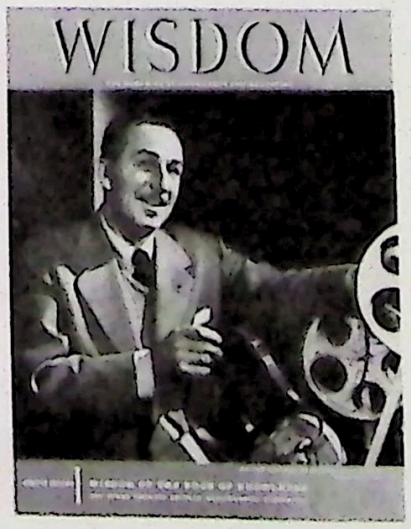

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WISDOM

THE MAGAZINE OF KNOWLEDGE FOR LIFETIME LEARNING AND EDUCATION

LEON GUTTERMAN
Editor and Publisher

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AND
THE WISDOM OF THE GREAT AUTHORS OF
THE GREAT BOOKS OF THE WESTERN WORLD

The following biographies, condensed from Great Books of the Western World, were written by Mortimer J. Adler, Associate Editor, Great Books of the Western World and Editor-in-Chief, The Great Ideas – A Syntopicon, in collaboration with many eminent scholars and educators.

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VOLUME THIRTY-THREE
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March 1960

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A LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

LEON GUTTERMAN, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

In a recent national survey, this question was asked: "What would be the first thing you would change if you could live your life over again?" The vast majority of people interviewed said: "My education."

Education is a continuous life-long process. Fortunately, people realize that what they knew at 21 is no longer enough to last them a lifetime. Education stays with us every waking hour, every day of our lives. It often determines the degree of achievement in our business or profession, home and family life, social affairs and civic duties, religious and personal philosophy. Actually, every minute of our lives is influenced in some manner by the extent of our education.

The aim of a liberal education is the improvement of the mind. Our minds grow with the acquisition of any sort of knowledge or skill, but the crucial phases of our mental development occur when we gain new insights, when our understanding deepens. Liberal education cannot be finished in school or college. It can be begun there, but the very immaturity of youth is the insuperable obstacle to its being done there. The conditions of adult life—the seriousness and responsibility of mature minds, the stability of character, the breadth of experience which comes only with the years—are prerequisite for the ultimate stages of liberal education. Only adults can really become deeply possessed by ideas. Only adults can realize the importance of the great human problems. Graduation from school or college does not make a liberally educated man or woman. To become liberally educated, those who have finished with formal schooling must keep their minds at work.

There is no royal road to education. The best books alone do not constitute such a road. The colleges and universities cannot open up such a road. Everywhere, the best-educated men and women are found to be self-educated, whether or not they have had much formal education. Emotions, experiences, contacts, have awakened their minds and stirred real curiosity—not the lazy curiosity with which students approach the books they must read at school. These self-educated men and women have plunged into the sea of books to think their way out of the apparent wilderness of ideas. They have fought and struggled for knowledge. They have constantly sought to coordinate and to systematize it. It becomes, finally, an important and necessary part of their lives. College rarely gives this kind of knowledge.

Out of the chaos of books, the intelligent man who seeks to educate himself must find books which can give him a broad and well-rounded understanding and enthusiasm. For no knowledge is valuable unless it is vigorous and dynamic and zestful—the kind of knowledge which makes life worth living. The person who hesitates to believe that he can gain, without the assistance of schools or colleges or teachers, the best liberal education that is possible has only to study understandingly the great books. No person's education is complete without the careful reading of great books.

The great thing to be desired is to learn to love books. No matter what his position in life may be, the lover of books is the richest and happiest of men. He that loves reading has everything within his reach. He has but to desire and he may have the most precious possessions—knowledge and wisdom. Reading minds are growing minds. When minds cease to read, they cease to grow. To read well is to think well. We are the sum total of what we read.

Is intelligence the product of reading? Or, is the reading habit the result of intelligence? Whichever comes first, the two are always associated. Thinking is to reading what rain and sunshine are to the seed placed in the ground. Yet we have ten thousand readers for one thinker, as the kind of books on our best-seller lists and those sought after in libraries bear witness. True reading demands seclusion, leisure, freedom from the crowd. Yet most people are gregarious. They confess that they "have no time to read." Their time is devoted to seeking pleasure, amusement, television, movies, and sports attractions. The reading man or woman is not gregarious. How I pity those who have no love of reading, of learning, or of study!

On what principle do most persons choose the books they read? Is there one in a thousand who ever gives a serious thought to the question, or makes any intelligent choice whatever? With many it is "the latest novel," utterly regardless of what it is. With others it is any sensational book or magazine that is talked about or advertised. We live in a time when the trivial and mediocre are glorified and held up in the blaze of sensation so as to attract the masses—and sell. That is all many books are made for—to sell. They are written for money. There is no soul in them. There is no high motive, or thought of doing good to anyone, of inspiring higher impulses, of adding to the world's wisdom, understanding, knowledge, or joy. They were made to sell, and to sell they must appeal to the lowest level of intelligence and mediocre taste of the day, or, in other words, to the desire for amusement, excitement, and diversion. So the country is flooded with worthless books, magazines and newspapers—many trivial publications that please or excite for a day, and are then forgotten—while really good books and valuable books are unsold and unread.

If we only knew how to reduce the literature of the world by judicious elimination of the useless and trashy, to a limit compassable in a diligent lifetime! This over-swollen stream of indiscriminate books, low in character, vulgar and corrupting, and entertaining the masses, and saturating the mind with unpurgible filthiness—is not a blessing but an unmitigated curse. Author Henry Fielding said, "We are as liable to be corrupted by books as by companions."

Great books are the key to man's culture. If they vanished overnight and could not be replaced, our civilization would disappear. Great books are a treasure, a precious storehouse. They contain enough to make us rich for time and eternity. They contain the secret of happy living. They contain the key of wisdom. They stand alone in human literature. They abound in plain truth, expressed in plain language; in this they surpass all other books.

Great books are both our luxuries and our daily bread. They have become to our lives and happiness prime necessities. They are our trusted friends, our guardians, our advisers, and the best consumers of our leisure. If you want life to mean more to you; if you need help for daily living, inspiration for a better life, strength and courage in time of trouble: remember that there are great books. Thoreau said, "Read the great books first, or you may not have a chance to read them at all." In the great books all the goodly company of the noble and great look eagerly at you from your bookshelves, waiting patiently to answer your questions and enrich you with their wisdom. They always receive you with the same kindness. They are always with us, always ready to respond to our wants, ready to teach us the best way of living, and the noblest way of thinking. So long as we have good health and good books, life can hardly be dull. They help us most because they make us think the most. These surely are curative virtues not to be despised by a modern civilization that suffers intensely from the maladies of mediocrity, foolishness, trviality, superficiality, frivolity, futility, juvenility, and shallowness.

Without the love of books the richest man is poor; but endowed with this treasure, the poorest man is rich. He has wealth which no power can diminish; riches which are always increasing; possessions which the more he scatters the more they accumulate; friends who never desert him, and pleasures which never end. Read the great books with your mind awake, your heart open, your imagination afire, and you will find a lifetime of strength, hope, and courage – a liberal education and an eternal new world of wisdom.

Leon Gutterman

Great books are ever-burning lamps of accumulated wisdom.—GOLDSMITH

Great books are the legacies that a great genius leaves to mankind, which are delivered down from generation to generation, as presents to the posterity of those who are yet unborn.—ADDISON

Great books are the world's treasured wealth, the fit inheritance of generations and nations.—THOREAU.

Great books are delightful when prosperity happily smiles; when adversity threatens, they are inseparable comforters. They never fail to give strength to human life.—HOLMES

A great book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life.—MILTON

Great books make us heirs of all eternity.—SHAKESPEARE

All that mankind has done, thought, gained or been: It is lying as in magic preservation in the pages of great books. They are the chosen possessions of men.—CARLYLE

If I have not read a book before, it is, to all intents and purposes, new to me, whether it was printed yesterday or three hundred years ago.—HAZLITT

All the known world, excepting only savage natives, is governed by great books.—VOLTAIRE

Great books are true levellers. They give to all, who will faithfully use them, the society, the spiritual presence, of the best and greatest of our race.—CHANNING

The true university these days is a collection of great books.—CARLYLE

Great books are the quietest and most constant of friends; they are the most accessible and wisest of counsellors, and the most patient of teachers.—ELIOT

Great books are great men of higher stature, and the only men that speak aloud for future times to hear.—BROWNING

Great books are the compasses, telescopes and charts which great men have prepared to help us navigate the dangerous seas of human life.—BENNETT

Great books and great thoughts rule the world.—EMERSON

The images of men's wits and knowledges remain in great books, exempted from the wrong of time, and capable of perpetual renovation.—BACON

In the great books great men talk to us, give us their most precious thoughts, and pour their souls into ours.—VOLTAIRE

Great books are the golden keys that open the palace of wisdom.—SCHWEITZER

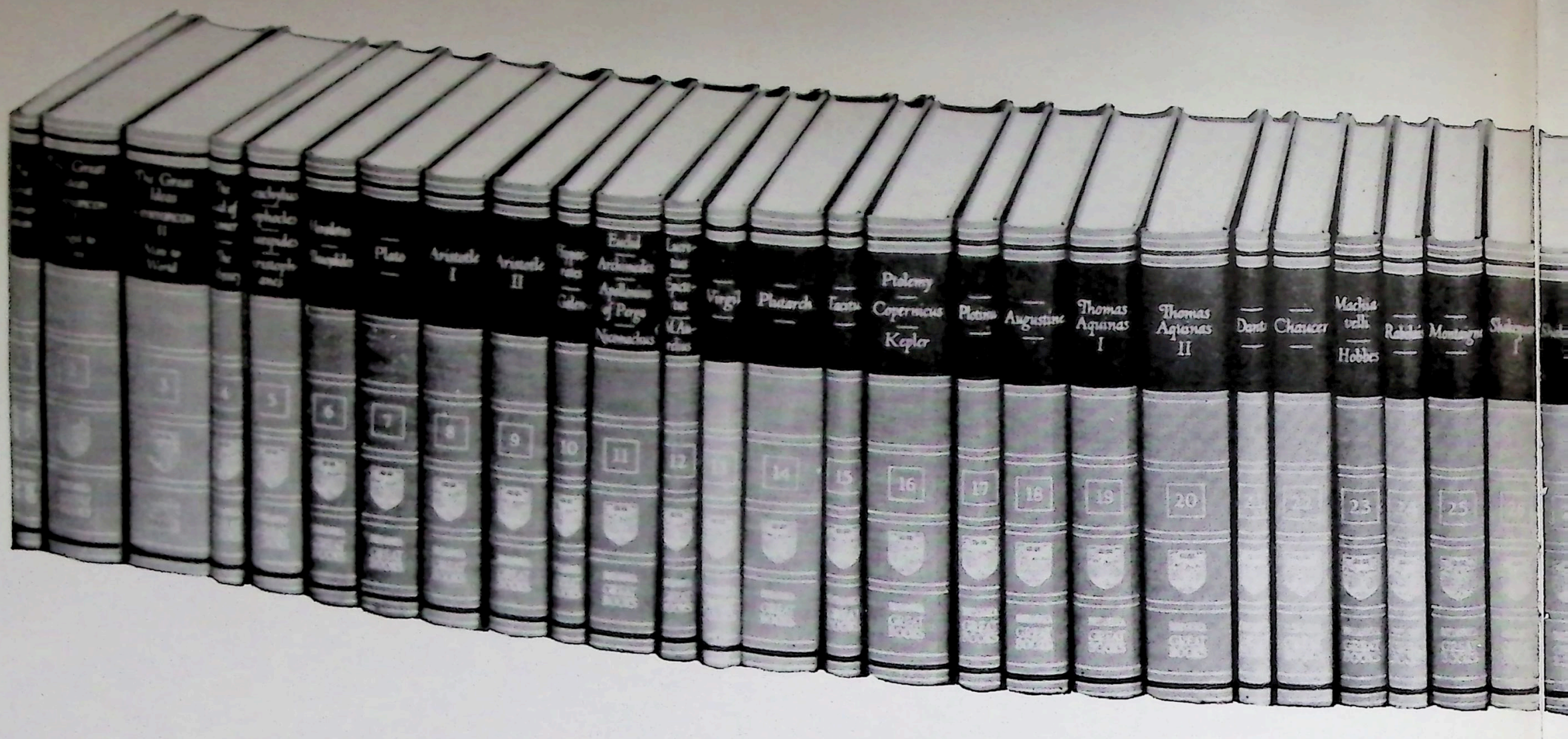
Great books open closed eyes, give glory and grace to human life. To accept them as friends is to open a bright and spacious new world.—WHITMAN

Great books are portions of the soul of man; great thoughts are portions of eternity.—LOWELL

Books which teach and speak of whatever is highest and best are equally sacred, whatever be the tongue in which they are written, or the nation to which they belong.—SPINOZA

GREAT THOUGHTS OF

GREAT MEN . . . ABOUT THE GREAT BOOKS

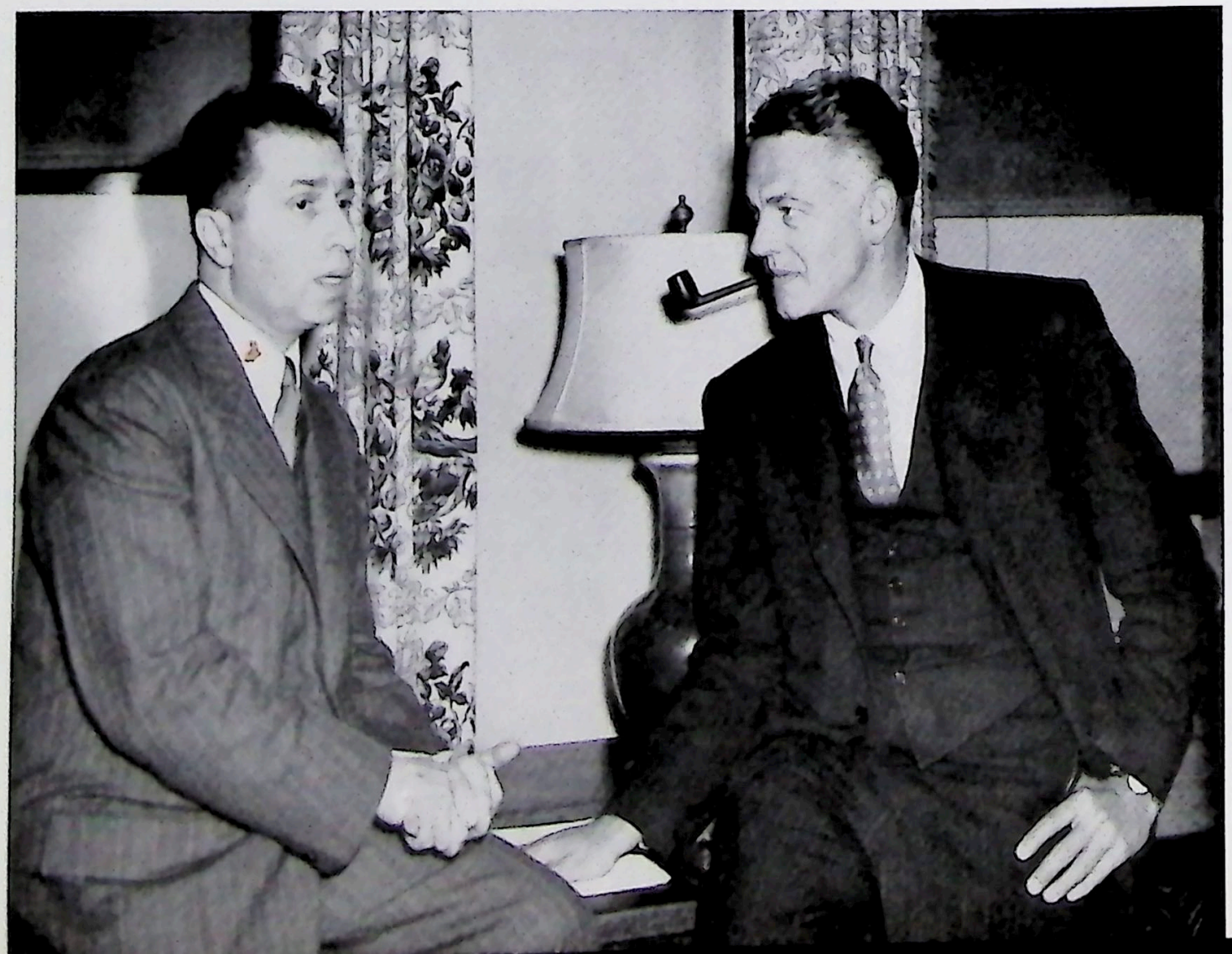


The Story of

THE GREAT BOOKS

of the Western World

Mortimer J. Adler, Editor-in-Chief, "The Great Ideas—A Syntopicon," and Robert M. Hutchins, Editor-in-Chief, the "Great Books of the Western World."



The WISDOM SEAL OF APPROVAL *has been awarded to* GREAT BOOKS OF THE WESTERN WORLD.

by the Editors of Wisdom

WHEN one of the outstanding publishing organizations in the world, Encyclopaedia Britannica, in collaboration with the University of Chicago, develops a single literary effort at a cost of two million dollars... when 100 eminent scholars pool their talents and, almost religiously, work together on the project for eight years... and when at last the completed program is greeted by critics and acclaimed by educators as one of the outstanding literary achievements of our generation... it becomes a venture which should be brought to the attention of every man and woman who enjoys creative thinking and fine writing.

In man's great quest for knowledge, nothing has ever approached the immensity of the project which resulted in the publication of the *Great Books of the Western World*. For here, in 54 distinctive volumes, are the writings of the outstanding minds of all time... the record of our existence... the development of our way of life... the full expression of the ideas that have determined our moral, ethical and legal codes. Through these works, the greatest minds of our civilization are brought together in a continuing conversation across the ages... *The Great Conversation*... talking to one another, performing on the single theme of man and his world, in the great symphony of the human spirit.

The *Great Books of the Western World,* and the *Syntopicon*—which is a vital part of this greatest of all literary and educational developments—is not just a "set of books" in the ordinary sense. The masterful writings included in these volumes were carefully selected by a group of eminent educators, philosophers, novelists, scientists and poets as representing the works indispensable to the liberal education of a free-man in the twentieth century.

Though the wisdom of the ages has long been recognized as unitary, it has never before been unified even physically. No other set of books published contains all the greatest books of the Western world.

No private library or collection can boast them all. Twelve of these books are long out of print in English and, therefore, unobtainable. An additional nine are either in their first English translation or are published in translation in the United States for the first time. Obtaining the rest, as individual items, would involve elaborate effort and even more elaborate expense.

The *Great Books* are capable of being both a prime source of self-improvement and an inexhaustible fund of adult entertainment because the best entertainment is that which elevates as it entertains. When the current best-sellers are forgotten, the *Great Books* will still be great, and will still be read by millions. Their perpetual challenge is the reason for their permanence as the property, not just the possession, of an educated man. As a possession they are dead weight. As a property, as something proper to an educated man, they are indispensable, because education is the acquisition of wisdom—not just information, but the means of understanding information and weighing it—and the *Great Books* are the accumulated wisdom of the human race.

The *Great Books* provide "continuous topical reading"—reading through a whole series of books on a given subject. Best of all, the vast research necessary to such an effort has been done for you. You have but to read... and listen. The *Syntopicon* finds your topic or "idea" and explores it through the centuries. It is a new kind of reference tool.

Not only have the great books been the education of the best educated men in every age, but their authors themselves were educated by them. Though the authors lived centuries and seas apart, they all "went to school" together. Virgil and Tacitus studied the Greeks, Augustine, Aquinas, and Dante studied the Greeks and the Romans. Montaigne, Rabelais, and Milton studied the Greeks, the Romans and the Mediaevals. The American Federalists and Mill, Marx, James, and Freud studied them all.

The *Great Books* are not the only books an educated man has read.

But they are the books that illuminate all the others. They are indispensable to living intelligently and purposefully in the growing confusion of the world around us.

The publication of the *Great Books of the Western World* makes this fund of human wisdom available, for the first time at a moment in history when both the freedom and the responsibility to utilize that wisdom repose more than ever before in the English-speaking peoples of the world.

The *Great Books of the Western World* is the whole record of our culture, and our culture is more than the isolated works of isolated minds. The men who created it lived in the past and the future as well as in the present. They created the tradition in which our institutions and ideas are rooted. They disagreed, but they knew they disagreed, and on what, and why.

Theirs is the spirit that unites all men everywhere and in every age in a common, continuing search. They are the universal men, whose ideas animated the captains and the kings, the persons, personages, and peoples of the earth; and their thinking is woven—not summarized, excerpted, or digested—into the *Great Books of the Western World.* They were, and they are, the architects of our civilization.

The great books are as great today, therefore, as yesterday. They are always and everywhere contemporaneous, because man is always and everywhere the same. Beginning with the *Bible,* they touch every man in all his concerns and at every crisis. In Thucydides, democracy and totalitarianism struggle to the death; in Milton and Goethe, man and the devil. In Archimedes, Galileo, and Faraday, man masters nature; in Augustine, he masters himself. In Aquinas, reason meets faith; in Newton, the earth meets the heavens; and in Freud, man meets his own subconscious. In Plutarch, Machiavelli, and Tolstoy, man's power tears the world apart; in Homer, Shakespeare, and Dostoevsky, man's soul is rent by ambition, envy, pride, and lust.

The making of great books lists is almost as old as the making of books. The single striking fact about all these lists is their similarity. No list since Plato omits the *Republic;* none since Shakespeare omits *Hamlet;* none since Tolstoy omits *War and Peace.*

Twenty years ago the men who brought the great books back into

Adler and his staff of scholars devoted 8 years to indexing the 3000 topics and 163,000 references contained in "The Great Ideas—A Syntopicon."

Editor-in-Chief Adler and his research staff of scholars accomplished the monumental task of indexing every important idea of Western civilization.

American education were assembled by the University of Chicago and Encyclopaedia Britannica. They were asked to select the greatest books of the Western tradition. After meeting over a period of two years, they presented their list for publication. It contained 443 works of 74 authors, exclusive of the *Bible*, which is already universally available and almost universally owned.

Are these all the great books there are? Obviously not. But they are the greatest. Works of unquestionable greatness were rejected because the Board of Editors based their selection on this one ultimate criterion: Which books are indispensable to the liberal education of a free man in the twentieth century? Which, in other words, are the greatest? The Board of Editors rejected the common procedure of publishing excerpts; 439 works were published in their entirety. Of many authors, all works were included—for example, the Greek dramatists, Plato, Aristotle, Hippocrates, Montaigne, Shakespeare, and Harvey. And in every instance, every basic work of the author was included.

Rudolph Ruzicka, one of America's leading designers and typographers, planned the design of the 54 volumes in the *Great Books*. With the great skill of the master designer, he gave each volume a format and typographical style appropriate to the works it contains. The volumes vary in size from 200 to 1,200 pages. They vary in color and typography as well. For example, the yellow bindings signify Epic and Dramatic Poetry, Satires, and Novels; the blue signify History, Ethics, Economics, Politics, and Jurisprudence; the green indicate Mathematics and Natural Sciences; the red bindings signify Philosophy and Theology. Neutral grey bindings are used for the three volumes which constitute the reference work of ideas.

Each of the *Great Books* is by itself a classic. Each can stand alone because of its originality, its universality, and its artistic unity. But the books are greatest performing together.

Liberal education—the education that liberates the human mind from prejudice and provincialism—is education for freedom. If every man is to be free, his mind must be free. And the *Great Books* are, first and last, the instrument of the liberal self-education of adults, who have had experience with, and are daily confronted by, the problems with which the books deal.

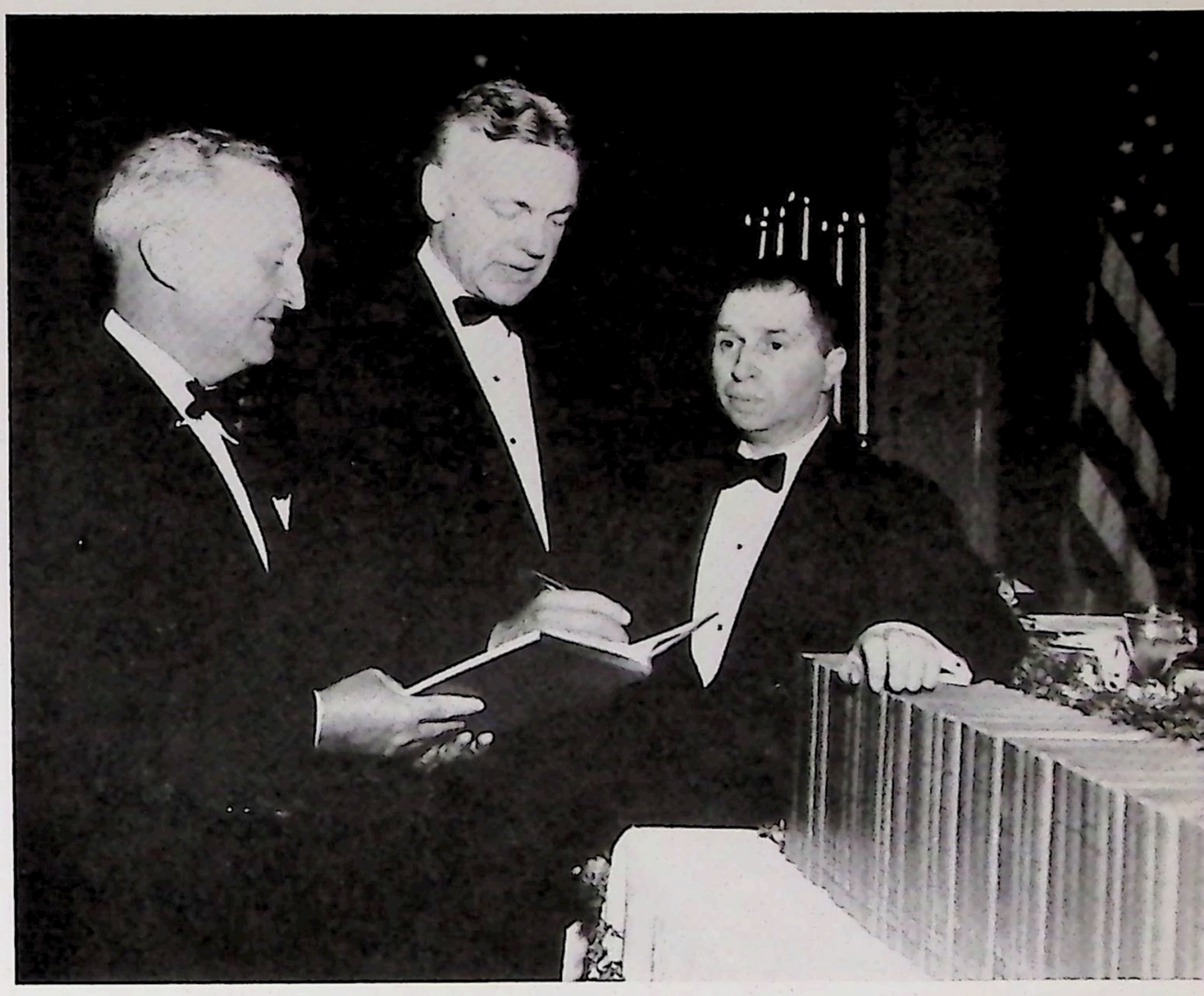
As Robert M. Hutchins puts it, "We have thought of education as an affair for the young. And the result has been that those things which only adults can understand, because only they have had the experience to understand them, we have never learned, and they are the most important things of all." The *Great Books* are not only a prime source of education for adults; they are also an inexhaustible source of adult entertainment. They can be both because the best entertainment is that which elevates as it entertains.

Only that which is greatest, in thought and art, is never exhausted. Each time we read *Hamlet* it is new, because each time we read it we are somehow made new by it. When the current best-sellers are forgotten, the *Iliad*, after three thousand years, will still be read by millions. And *Oedipus the King* will still be performed when the "ten best" plays of this year are gone.

The fact that the *Great Books* are the works of the most original minds and the most spirited teachers the world has known, accounts for their infinite re-readability. Though they can be read profitably at every educational level, with ever-deepening insight and enjoyment, the *Great Books* are always "over our heads." Their thinking is always better than ours is, but never better than ours can be.

"Everybody wants to have read the great books," said Mark Twain, "but nobody wants to read them." We want to have read them because we recognize that they are the enlightenment and entertainment proper to an educated man. Why, then, don't we want to read them? We don't want to read them because the great books are hard. Listening—or half-listening—to the radio is easy. Reading—or half-reading—light novels is easy. Looking at television or a motion picture is easy. The life of intellectual ease is perversely easy and, perverse as we are, we aren't satisfied with it. We still want to learn, to understand, to grow, and to enjoy in the deepest and most human sense of the term.

So, though the easy is alluring, and the best education, like the best of anything, is hard to come by, the easy solves none of our problems



Publisher William Benton and Editors Robert M. Hutchins and Mortimer J. Adler have preserved the accumulated wisdom of the human race for generations to come in the "Great Books of the Western World," the outstanding literary and educational achievement of our time.

and, in the end, it is not even alluring. Because this is so, the Editors of the *Great Books of the Western World* decided that they were interested in an educational, not a publishing venture—if they could not bring the *Great Books* to the minds of the American people, they would not edit them for publication.

"We are not interested in providing printed furniture for the American home," says Robert M. Hutchins. "We are interested in getting people to read and enjoy the most readable and enjoyable books ever written. We can do this in school, if we try, with young people. We do not yet know how we can do it with a set of books."

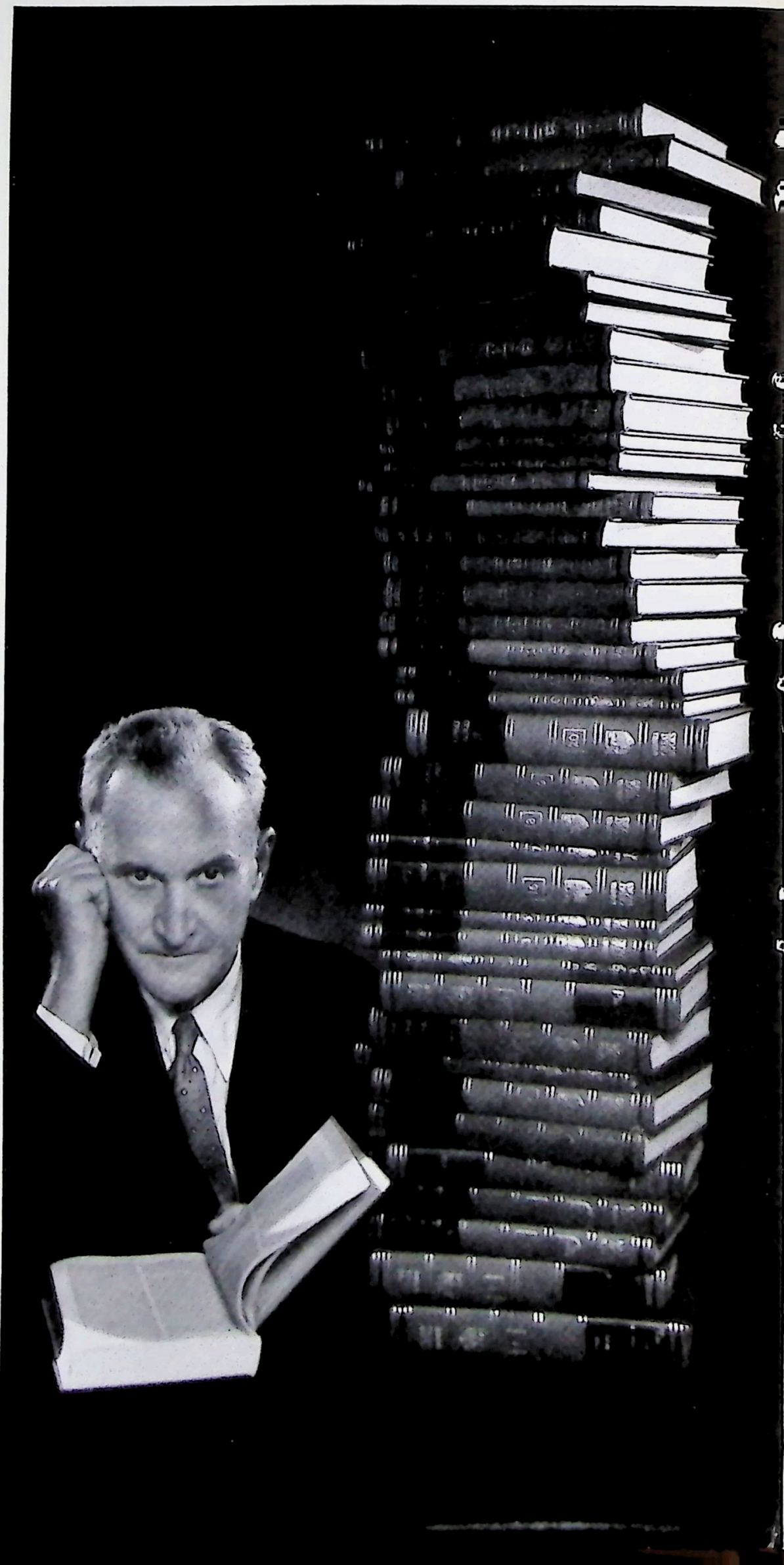
What can the *Great Books* mean to you? Just as an adult education is interminable, the *Great Books* are inexhaustable. They can never be read enough. They benefit for a lifetime. They are an invaluable means of self-help, self-improvement. They nourish alertness, prevent one from "going to sleep" mentally. They increase vocabulary, provide a common means of conversational companionship. They help to develop a personal philosophy of life, help one to make sense out of the many contradictions and complexities of life. They help one to measure and evaluate his own prejudices, convictions and hopes against the timeless standards of thought. They provide interesting and entertaining reading material from the best minds of our civilization. They provide perspective and make possible a clearer insight to issues in business and politics. They stimulate the mind, sharpen the wits, help one to get along in business, the professions, with associates and family. They are an invaluable tool to the speaker, the writer, the forum leader. They provide children with unusual advantages because they enable parents to better direct the child's activities. They save students and scholars endless research. They open new vistas of thinking...they support a lifetime of learning.

The *Great Books* are not a monument. They are meant to be read. They have an inner unity and continuity that makes them forever readable. You will find the *Great Books* as permanently satisfying as the pursuit of wisdom is endless.

The *Great Books* are as great today, therefore, as yesterday or tomorrow. They are always and everywhere contemporaneous, because man is always and everywhere the same. They touch every man in all his concerns and at every crisis.

Whatever your present acquaintance with rich literature, you will find in the *Syntopicon* and the *Great Books of the Western World* a new appreciation of the literary masterpieces of the Western world...a unique approach to a mature comprehension of ideas...and an inexhaustible new world of reading pleasure. ♦

William Benton, former Assistant Secretary of State and United States Senator; Publisher and Chairman of the Board, Encyclopaedia Britannica; Publisher, Great Books of the Western World.



THERE are probably very few people who labor under the delusion that because they once satisfactorily completed a physics course in school their knowledge of science is complete. In fact, there is general recognition that a scientist's education is never complete.

It is paradoxical indeed that in the equally profound areas of history, philosophy, theology, literature, all the important humanities, just the reverse is commonly held to be true. Once the required course of study is passed and a college degree earned, our education in these subjects is often assumed to be complete.

This, of course, could not be further from the truth. A person who does not continue year after year to add to his knowledge and insight can never be a really educated man. In fact, just the opposite is likely to occur. Change is a law of life. Nothing remains static. Our interests either broaden or narrow. Our thoughts deepen or become ever more shallow. We grow in knowledge and perception or our minds shrink away to insignificance.

The amount of formal schooling possible to us is usually limited, of course, by the necessity of earning a living. Only self-education can continue to give us the constant association with great minds and the contemplation of great thoughts which produce an educated man. The edition of the *Great Books* was compiled with this purpose in mind – to provide nourishment the mind needs to grow in wisdom – the ripe fruit of education. – WILLIAM BENTON

Educators Robert M. Hutchins and Mortimer J. Adler answer audience questions after Great Books Seminar.

GREAT BOOKS DISCUSSION GROUPS

and The Great Books Foundation

by the Editors of Wisdom

THE GREAT BOOKS speak directly to every man, of himself and of his human concerns. Their voices are original, forceful, clear. They have for generations been widely read by thoughtful men, have influenced men's personal histories and the wider history of their recorded acts. Both timeless and timely, they deal with our basic problems, the persistent questions that each man asks himself, every society is forced to deal with—now and always.

Where men and women read the *Great Books,* when they assemble to exchange understanding and evaluation of these books, they also join an old and honorable community. That community is the gathering of seekers. Central to it, sustaining and animating it, are those thinkers—from Plato to our contemporaries—who offer us, in ageless books, their sense of truth.

Certain books are esteemed as great because of their perennial relevance. Though they may have been written hundreds, even thousands, of years ago, in a country halfway around the world, they speak directly to us of ourselves, of our fellows, of the problems which are the great human problems: Of man and the state; birth and death; love, marriage, and disenchantment; living and making a living; virtue, crime, and sin; nature and super-nature. We are free to reject the answers of any given author, but his answers will, if his work deserves to be called great, be worthy of our consideration.

The great authors are not in agreement; often, they will present conflicting, even contradictory answers to the basic questions. The participant in a *Great Books* discussion may disagree with many of them—must, in fact, in the face of disparate positions. His decisions are his own. But whatever the answers the *Great Books* offer, they probe for the heart of each question. And in doing so, they help each participant to think straight, to think for himself, and to think at the level of greatness.

In communities all over the United States, free men and women are participating in Great Books Discussion Groups. They are devoted to the *Great Books* idea because it is one way to use their freedom and keep it bright. They also feel that the Great Books Program is their own. And it is.

Good conversation flourishes where thoughtful adults read and discuss *Great Books.* In a Great Books Discussion Group, the participant

Mortimer J. Adler leading a Great Books Discussion Group composed of outstanding business executives.

finds the excitement and freedom of active minds at work and play. He discovers in himself and others a growing self-awareness, together with an expanding sense of fellowship in a common tradition of humanity. Illuminating and directing these discoveries are the *Great Books*, whose power to generate insight springs from their perceptive concern with man's eternal questions. Plato and Shakespeare, Thucydides and Dante—these and many other choice spirits call each of us, as they have men in all ages, to join them and share the world of ideas. In each *Great Books* discussion, participants find the opportunity to create and inhabit that world. There each member is free to realize the pleasure—and the enlarging responsibility—of active thought.

How were the Great Books Discussion Groups started? To a surprising degree, by dint of the effort of the people in them. They heard about the program from a friend, read a story in a newspaper or magazine, or saw a poster in a library. Then because the idea seemed so rewarding yet simple, they did something about it. They asked for help from the Great Books Foundation and from sponsoring agencies in the communities where they lived. The Foundation supplied some of their needs—the sponsors others. Sponsors and the Foundation have joined their efforts. As a result, the Great Books Program has grown remarkably during the past few years.

A Great Books Discussion Group is people come together to talk about a book they have all read. A *Great Book* does not have to be discussed, of course. It can be read and then put back on the shelf. It can be lectured about, perhaps to save busy people the time it would take to read it for themselves, perhaps to save them the trouble, even if they have read it, of thinking about it out loud, of comparing notes on interpretations and evaluations with their peers. Yet a *Great Book* that goes unexamined in the free give-and-take of adult discussion is a book whose greatness is more a matter of reputation than of discovery.

Discussion of a book varies in value with three principal factors: The book itself; the leaders; the participants. The program is based on the belief that the best books are the books most worth discussing, the books most likely to yield fruitful and entertaining discussion. There are many, many books that deserve to be called great—not one hundred, or some other magical number—and they were written in all times (including our own) and in all places (including our own). Yes, to some extent scholars differ as to exactly which books and which authors deserve the highest commendation, and yet there is an astonishing agreement on the stature of Homer and Sophocles and Plato, of Montaigne, Milton, and Shakespeare, of Goethe, Darwin, Tolstoy, and Freud—and of many others. No reader is obliged to find any one work, say Machiavelli's *The Prince*, especially to his taste, but such a book comes with the highest recommendation: One leaves it unread at his own peril. In the free, critical discussion of the germinal ideas, of the best minds the world has engendered, our own minds are enlivened.

The *Great Books* are adding an important dimension to the lives of Americans—doctors and housewives, mailmen and stenographers, lawyers and businessmen, and many others. Within the first eight years of operation the Foundation was instrumental in forming and maintaining Great Books Discussion Groups throughout the United States and Canada. At present there are more than 2000 groups with 40,000 members. The average group is made up of fifteen to twenty men and women who meet for two hours every other week to talk about a book and to enjoy the interplay of viewpoints, the opportunity for self-expression, the new friendships with others in the group. Groups meet in libraries and churches, community houses and homes, stores and factories—wherever a circle of chairs is available. Each group has two discussion leaders, whose questions develop and focus the exchange of the members. Their services, the attendance of the participants, and in almost all cases the offer of meeting space, are entirely voluntary and unpaid. Purchase of the readings is optional.

The main purposes of the Great Books Program are these: To keep alive the common heritage of thought, sensibility, and faith which finds expression in the *Great Books* of our tradition; to give men, through reading and discussing the *Great Books*, a richer comprehension of what the good life can be; and to help them, here and now, to lead the good life, for themselves, their community, and their nation.

Lynn A. Williams, Chairman of the Board, Great Books Foundation.

Great Books Discussion Group members learn to think for themselves; to interpret and evaluate the readings critically and independently.

The Foundation's job is to aid people in realizing these objectives for themselves, by their own activities, and toward this end offers assistance in the following ways: Training discussion leaders; supplying publicity materials, aiding in the organization of community groups; publishing and making available the books in inexpensive boxed editions, comprised of the sixteen readings in each year; and providing continuing assistance and advice to leaders and groups.

The objective of the Foundation, to provide the means of continuing liberal education for adults, is implemented by a program of reading assignments and discussions that go on progressively year after year, beginning each year with ancient, and coming down to relatively modern, works. There are no course credits, no distinctions on the basis of formal education, no examinations, and no graduation.

But there is, in the truest sense, a faculty, and, without question, the greatest faculty ever assembled. The roster begins with the *Bible*, Homer and the Greek philosophers, and includes Shakespeare, Dante, Milton, Tolstoy, Darwin, and Jefferson. Although each discussion group has two leaders, the leaders are not teachers. The books are the teachers. The group leaders are laymen who, customarily, have taken a Foundation Leader Training course. Their function is to conduct each meeting by asking questions, engender around-the-table conversation, stimulate it, and keep it pointed. Members are encouraged to interpret and evaluate the readings critically and independently—to think for themselves. The discussions are free and informal. Viewpoints vary—opinions clash—insights are quickened—and the two hours never seem long enough.

The end of liberal education is man, the individual. Man, conscious of his relationship to his society and the universe around him. The Foundation believes that its program is the best way to attain this end: Where adults meet as equals to discuss the books that set forth the basic enduring problems of all men and the most significant answers that men's minds have evolved to these problems throughout history.

Some people are surprised to find themselves reading, and reading with understanding, works of Aristotle, Descartes, Rousseau, and Adam Smith. Yet, by and large, these and other great minds wrote, not primarily for scholars but for an intelligent audience of laymen. And most of them wrote very well indeed.

Joining in the discussion of *Great Books* means learning to read for content, to communicate ideas effectively, to listen with understanding, and to think clearly and logically. Each reading is short enough for a busy adult to finish during the period between meetings—yet long enough to contain a complete unit of thought. The books discussed speak openly and directly about the basic problems of human life: What can I know? What can I hope for? What is man? How ought I to act? Such questions have concerned men for centuries; they concern each of us today.

Many persons, agencies, and schools helped to launch the Great Books Program. Although most of the original groups were centered in the Chicago area, interest in the program spread rapidly beyond that city. In 1947, to promote this interest and serve it nationally, the Great Books Foundation, a non-profit educational organization whose sole purpose lies in the encouragement of people to read and to meet together to discuss *Great Books*, was incorporated as an independent educational enterprise to foster self-education by adults. There is no fee for participation. To support this free program of adult liberal education, the unendowed Great Books Foundation depends annually upon the voluntary purchase of the Great Books Readings, upon grants from philanthropic organizations, and upon gifts from individuals through its Annual Membership Plan.

Great Books Foundation representatives are located in nearly every large city and town, with offices in Chicago, Memphis, New York City, San Francisco, Dallas and Los Angeles. The Foundation staff works in cooperation with local sponsors—business and professional organizations, libraries, schools, citizens committees—providing leadership training, publicity materials, and assistance in organizing groups. This pattern of co-sponsorship—cooperation between the local sponsor and the Foundation—has produced America's largest liberal arts program for adults.

Lynn A. Williams, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Great Books Foundation, states, "The people who participate in the Great Books Program have been found not to be withdrawn from current affairs but to be among the most active in them; they read not only the *Great Books* but a great many other things to inform themselves about the world they live in today; their participation in the Great Books Program leads to a marked reduction in the reading of junk, while the total amount of their reading increases; what happens to them, of course, is that their taste for triviality or trash is spoiled by what is good.

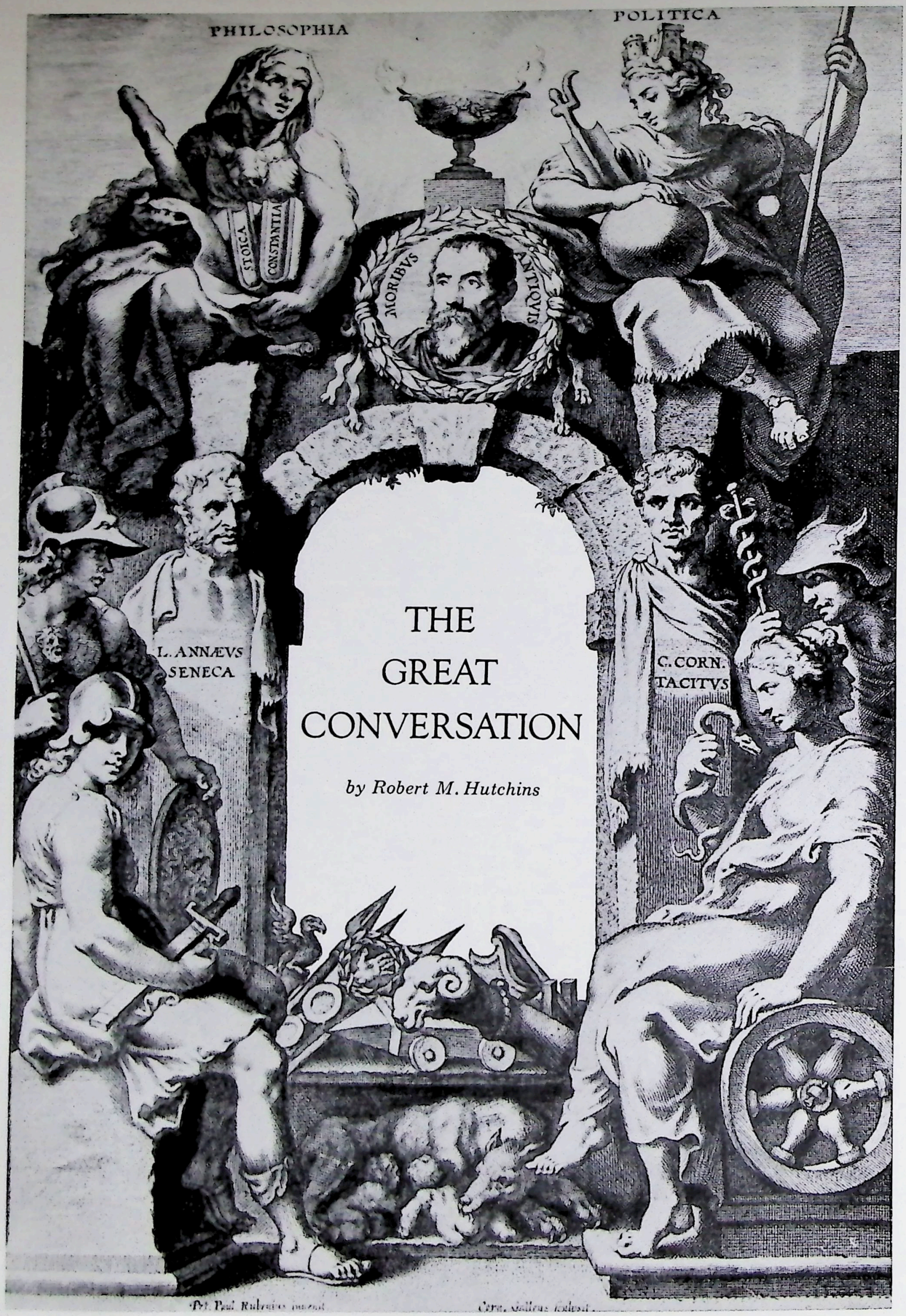
"The participants in the Great Books Program are far more aware of the problems of the world and far more active in doing something about them than other people of comparable educational and social status. The *Great Books* readers seem to find time to read the *Great Books* but, also, they find time to take an active part in the work of their local school boards and local governments, in their councils on foreign relations and in political affairs. So that, as it turns out in fact, the Great Books Program does not distract or subtract attention from the problems of the day, but, on the contrary, seems to stimulate and enhance the kind of interest and activity which everyone who believes in a democratic society wants to encourage.

"The Great Books Program stands for rationality, for use of the processes of thought, for debate and discussion, and for increase in human understanding. I sometimes suspect that one of the reasons for the success of the Great Books Program is that it offers a kind of island of rational and serious thought in a sea of impulses, drives and motivations. The processes of thought are slow; persuasion is difficult; understanding takes time. And there are no short cuts.

"The Great Books Program is good because it gives perspective to our problems, because somehow it conduces to greater activity of its participants in civic, cultural and political affairs, and, then, because it opens up vistas of rationality in a world which badly needs it. In other words, the Great Books Program is good because of its effect on other things. The Great Books Program may play its small part in helping us toward world peace, toward better race relations, toward better government.

"Reading the *Great Books* is not primarily for the purpose of improving government or achieving world peace. The purpose of good government and of world peace is to permit reading of the *Great Books*.

"One of the things which our world needs is a clearer sense of what life is for and what it is to lead a good life. I do not suggest for a moment, of course, that reading the *Great Books* itself constitutes the entirety of a good life, but it is a part of it. If, in addition, the reading and discussion of the *Great Books* aids a better understanding of the proper ends of human existence, then it helps to provide something our world of today very much needs." ♦



THE GREAT CONVERSATION

by Robert M. Hutchins

UNTIL lately the West has regarded it as self-evident that the road to education lay through great books. No man was educated unless he was acquainted with the masterpieces of his tradition. There never was very much doubt in anybody's mind about which the masterpieces were. They were the books that had endured and that the common voice of mankind called the finest creations, in writing, of the Western mind.

In the course of history, from epoch to epoch, new books have been written that have won their place in the list. Books once thought entitled to belong to it have been superseded; and this process of change will continue as long as men can think and write. It is the task of every generation to reassess the tradition in which it lives, to discard what it cannot use, and to bring into context with the distant and intermediate past the most recent contributions to the Great Conversation. The *Great Books of the Western World* is the result of an attempt to reappraise and re-embody the tradition of the West for our generation.

The Editors do not believe that any of the social and political changes that have taken place in the last fifty years, or any that now seem imminent, have invalidated or can invalidate the tradition or make it irrelevant for modern men. On the contrary, they are convinced that the West needs to recapture and re-emphasize and bring to bear upon its present problems the wisdom that lies in the works of its greatest thinkers and in the discussion that they have carried on.

The *Great Books* are offered in no antiquarian spirit. We have not seen our task as that of taking tourists on a visit to ancient ruins or to the quaint productions of primitive peoples. We have not thought of providing our readers with hours of relaxation or with an escape from the dreadful cares that are the lot of every man in the second half of the twentieth century after Christ. We are as concerned as anybody else at the headlong plunge into the abyss that Western civilization seems to be taking. We believe that the voices that may recall the West to sanity are those which have taken part in the Great Conversation. We want them to be heard again—not because we want to go back to antiquity, or the Middle Ages, or the Renaissance, or the Eighteenth Century. We are quite aware that we do not live in any time but the present, and, distressing as the present is, we would not care to live in any other time if we could. We want the voices of the Great Conversation to be heard again because we think they may help us to learn to live better now.

We believe that in the passage of time the neglect of these books in the twentieth century will be regarded as an aberration, and not, as it is sometimes called today, a sign of progress. We think that progress, and progress in education in particular, depends on the incorporation of the ideas and images included in the *Great Books* in the daily lives of all of us, from childhood through old age. In this view the disappearance of great books from education and from the reading of adults constitutes a calamity. In this view education in the West has been steadily deteriorating; the rising generation has been deprived of its birthright; the mess of pottage it has received in exchange has not been nutritious; adults have come to lead lives comparatively rich in material comforts and very poor in moral, intellectual, and spiritual tone.

We do not think that these books will solve all our problems. We do not think that they are the only books worth reading. We think that these books shed some light on all our basic problems, and that it is folly to do without any light we can get. We think that these books show the origins of many of our most serious difficulties. We think that the spirit they represent and the habit of mind they teach are more necessary today than ever before. We think that the reader who does his best to understand these books will find himself led to read and helped to understand other books. We think that reading and understanding great books will give him a standard by which to judge all other books.

We believe that the reduction of the citizen to an object of propaganda, private and public, is one of the greatest dangers to democracy. A prevalent notion is that the great mass of the people cannot understand and cannot form an independent judgment upon any matter; they cannot be educated, in the sense of developing their intellectual powers, but they can be bamboozled. The reiteration of slogans, the distortion of the news, the great storm of propaganda that beats upon the citizen twenty-four hours a day all his life long mean either that democracy must fall a prey to the loudest and most persistent propagandists or that the people must save themselves by strengthening their minds so that they can appraise the issues for themselves.

Though we do not recommend great books as a panacea for our ills, we must admit that we have an exceedingly high opinion of them as an educational instrument. We think of them as the best educational instrument for young people and adults today. By this we do not mean that the *Great Books of the Western World* are the last word that can be said on the subject. We may have made errors of selection. We hope that this collection may some day be revised in the light of the criticism it will receive. But the idea that liberal education is the education that everybody ought to have, and that the best way to a liberal education in the West is through the greatest works the West has produced, is still, in our view, the best educational idea there is.

The elements of novelty in the present-day presentation of this idea are accounted for by the changes of the past fifty years. Great books have disappeared, or almost disappeared, from American education. Since we take American education as the prototype of education in any highly developed industrial democracy, we predict their disappearance everywhere in the West.

We regard this disappearance as an aberration, and not as an indication of progress. We do not look upon this disappearance as a benefit to be thankful for, but as an error that should be corrected. The element of novelty that results from the disappearance of the books we take to be novelty only in the most superficial sense. We see the *Great Books* as continuing a tradition that has been only momentarily interrupted.

A second element of novelty in the presentation of the *Great Books* at this time is found in the proposition that democracy requires liberal education for all. We believe that this proposition is true. We concede that it has not been "scientifically" proved. We call upon our fellow citizens to test it. We think they will agree that, if this is the ideal, we should struggle to reach it and not content ourselves with inferior substitutes until we are satisfied that the goal cannot be attained.

The third element of novelty in the effort to restore these books to education is found in the conception of adult education that we wish to advance. Until very recently the education of adults the world over was regarded as compensatory; opportunity for adult study was offered those whose economic, social, or political position had deprived them, in ways often regarded as unjust, of the amount of formal education usual among the "superior" classes.

I am referring here, of course, only to general nonvocational education. Many other kinds of educational activities for adults have traveled under other banners: labor unions have wanted to train their members in industrial bargaining; individuals have wanted to prepare themselves for better jobs. When a man has made up for the deficiencies of his formal schooling, his obligation, and usually his desire, to educate himself naturally disappeared. He had reached the goal he had set for himself. I think it fair to say that in most countries of the world today the notion that a man who had "had" in childhood and youth the best institutional education the country had to offer should go on educating himself all his life would be regarded as fantastic.

Yet we believe that the obligation rests on all of us, uneducated, miseducated, and educated alike, to do just that. We do not depreciate the possibilities of the *Great Books* as a means of educating young people. We think the sooner the young are introduced to the Great Conversation the better. They will not be able to understand it very well; but they should be introduced to it in the hope that they will continue to take part in it and eventually understand it. But we confess that we had principally in mind the needs of the adult population, who, in America at least, have as a result of the changes of the last fifty years the leisure to become educated men and women. They now have the chance to understand themselves through understanding their tradition.

The members of the Advisory Board, in addition to long experience as teachers of young people, had all devoted a large part of their lives to the education of adults. They had all sought to use great books for the purpose of educating adults. They determined to try to offer the means of liberal education in a coherent program. The *Great Books of*

the Western World was the result.

The Board asked itself whether an individual book contributed in an important way to the Great Conversation. The members drew upon their experience in teaching as a guide. They do not claim that all the great books of the West are here. They would not be embarrassed at the suggestion that they had omitted a book, or several books, greater than any they had included. They would be disturbed if they thought they had omitted books essential to a liberal education or had included any that had little bearing upon it.

The discussions of the Board revealed few differences of opinion about the overwhelming majority of the books in the list. The *Great Books* are almost self-selected, in the sense that one book leads to another, amplifying, modifying, or contradicting it. There is not much doubt about which are the most important voices in the Great Conversation. Of marginal cases there are a few. Many readers will be disappointed to find one, at least, of their favorite works missing. Many readers will be surprised to find some author of whom they had a low opinion given a place of honor. The final decision on the list was made by me. I do not pretend that my prejudices played no part; I would like to claim that I sought, obtained, and usually accepted excellent advice.

Readers who are startled to find the Bible omitted from the *Great Books of the Western World* will be reassured to learn that this was done only because Bibles are already widely distributed, and it was felt unnecessary to bring another into homes that had several already. References to the Bible are, however, included in both the King James and the Douai versions under the appropriate topics in the *Syntopicon.*

The Editors felt that the chronological order was the most appropriate organizing principle for the volumes of the *Great Books.* Since they conceived of this collection of books as reproducing a conversation among its authors, it was a natural decision to make the successive volumes of the set present, so far as possible, the authors in the temporal sequence in which they took part in that conversation.

The chronological structure of the *Great Books* covers more than twenty-five centuries, terminating with the end of the nineteenth century. With the exception of some of Freud's writings, all the other works were written or published before 1900; and some of Freud's important works were published before that date.

The Editors do not think that the Great Conversation came to an end before the twentieth century began. On the contrary, they know that the Great Conversation has been going on during the first half of this century, and they hope it will continue to go on during the rest of this century and the centuries to follow. They are confident that great books have been written since 1900 and that the twentieth century will contribute many new voices to the Great Conversation.

Since the *Great Books of the Western World* was conceived of as a great conversation, it is obvious that the books could not have been chosen with any dogma or even with any point of view in mind. In a conversation that has gone on for twenty-five centuries, all dogmas and points of view appear. Here are the great errors as well as the great truths.

Some readers may feel that we have been too hard in insisting that the great works of science are a part of the conversation and that a man who has not read them has not acquired a liberal education. Others, who concede the importance of science to understanding the world today, may raise the question of whether it is possible to understand modern science and its contribution to the modern world through the medium of books of the past. They may feel that, whereas philosophy, history, and literature can produce works that are always fresh and new, natural science is progressive and is rapidly outdated. Why read Copernicus or Faraday if scientists now know everything that they knew, and much more besides?

It is true that scientific works are often omitted from lists of important books on the assumption that such works lack the educational significance of the great poems, the great histories, and the great philosophies and are somehow not part of our "culture"; or that they cannot be read except by a few specialists; or that science, unlike poetry, has somehow "advanced" in modern times in such fashion as to rob the great steps in that advance of any but antiquarian value.

But the Editors do not agree that the great poets of every time are to be walked with and talked with, but not those who brought deep insight into the mystery of number and magnitude or the natural phenomena they observed about them.

We do not agree that better means of observation or more precise instruments of measurement invalidate the thinking of great scientists of the past, even where such means cause us to correct the hypotheses of these scientists.

We lament the man who, properly desiring to wrestle at first hand with the problems that the great poets and philosophers have raised, yet contents himself with the "results" and "findings" of modern science.

We believe that it is a gratuitous assumption that anybody can read poetry but very few can read mathematics. In view of the countless engineers and technicians in our society we should expect many to find the mathematical and scientific masterpieces more understandable than many other works. As Stringfellow Barr has said, the world is rapidly dividing into technicians who cannot tell the difference between a good poem and sentimental doggerel and "cultured" people who know nothing about electricity except that you push a button when you want it. In a society that is highly technological the sooner the citizens understand the basic ideas of mathematics and natural science the better.

Poor books in science deal with specialties that serve the technician and pride themselves on juggling jargon. But the best books get their power from the refinement and precise use of the common language. As far as the medium of communication is concerned, they are products of the most elegant literary style, saying precisely what is meant. Like literary books, they have beginnings, middles, and ends that move from familiar situations through complications to unravelings and recognitions. They sometimes end in the revelation of familiar mysteries.

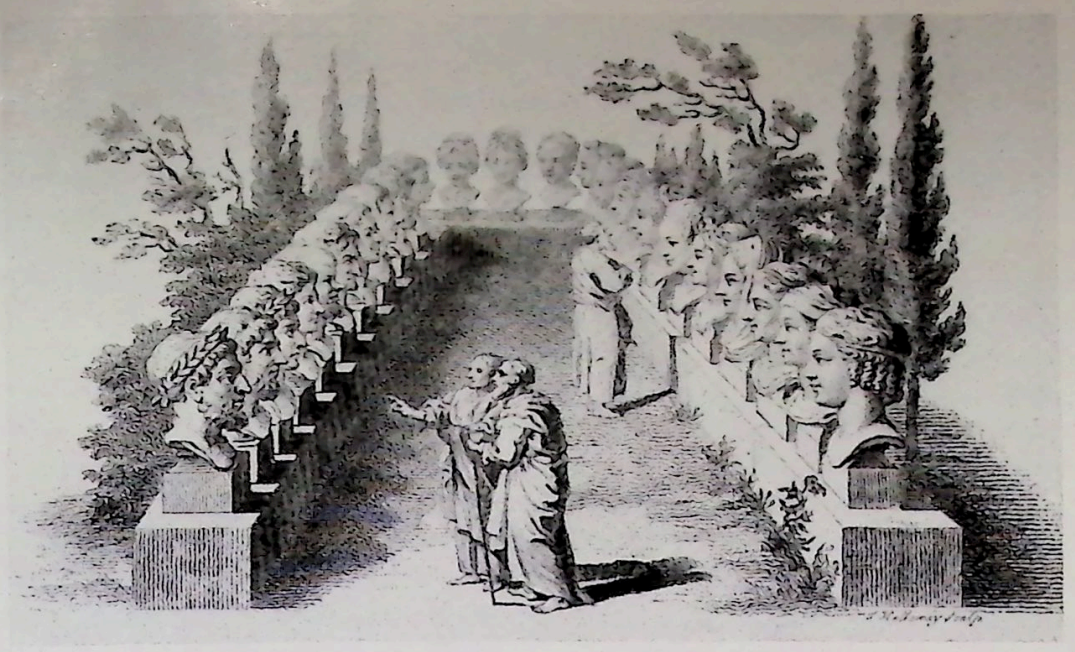
The atmosphere we breathe today, because of the universal use of gadgets and machines, because the word "scientific" is employed in a magical sense, and because of the half-hidden technological fabric of our lives, is full of the images and myths of science. The minds of men are full of shadows and reflections of things that they cannot grasp. As Scott Buchanan has said, "Popular science has made every man his own quack; he needs some of the doctor's medicine."

Much of this is the result of the mystery that modern man has made of mathematics. It is supposed that the scientist or engineer can understand great scientific works because he understands mathematics, which nobody but a scientist or engineer can understand. This is the reason why a fairly continuous series of great books in mathematics is contained in the *Great Books.* The Editors believe that mathematical truth will set us free from the superstitious awe that surrounds the scientific enterprise today.

The Advisory Board recommended that no scholarly apparatus should be included in the *Great Books of the Western World.* No "introductions" giving the Editors' views of the authors should appear. The books should speak for themselves, and the reader should decide for himself. Great books contain their own aids to reading; that is one reason why they are great. Since we hold that these works are intelligible to the ordinary man, we see no reason to interpose ourselves or anybody else between the author and the reader.

The *Syntopicon,* which began as an index and then turned into a means of helping the reader find paths through the books, argues no case and presents no point of view. It will not interpret any book to the reader; it will not tell him which author is right and which wrong on any question. It simply supplies him with suggestions as to how he may conveniently pursue the study of any important topic through the range of Western intellectual history. It shows him how to find what great men have had to say about the greatest issues and what is being said about these issues today.

The *Syntopicon* is, in addition to all this, a step forward in the thought of the West. It indicates where we are: where the agreements and disagreements lie; where the problems are; where the work has to be done. It thus helps to keep us from wasting our time through misunderstanding and points to the issues that must be attacked. When the history of the intellectual life of this century is written, the *Syntopicon* will be regarded as one of the landmarks in it. ♦



HOW TO READ GREAT BOOKS

by Mortimer J. Adler

A HUNDRED years ago leisure and learning were the privilege of the few. For the great mass of men, the years of schooling were short and the days of labor long. Those who worked all or most of their lives for a living had little free time to continue with learning after a brief schooling in childhood had prepared them for the time-consuming occupations of their adult life. Nor did they, for the most part, have the opportunities or the incentives. Publicly supported efforts to help and stimulate men to enrich their lives were meager. There were few public libraries. Only the very well-to-do could afford libraries of their own.

With the dawn of industrial democracy at the turn of this century, extraordinary changes began to take place which affected the lives of all of us. In the first fifty years of the twentieth century, universal manhood suffrage gradually became an accomplished fact. The increasing productivity of industrial machinery gradually emancipated most men from a lifetime of grinding toil. The years of schooling for children lengthened; the hours of the working day and the span of the working life shortened.

As the great mass of men came into possession of the political power and the opportunities for leisure that had previously been the privilege of the few, they acquired real incentives to continue learning in adult life. Publicly supported facilities to help them multiplied. As more and more men were given the political and economic conditions of freedom, it became possible for more and more human beings to lead the lives of free men.

The whole purpose of liberal education in the life of a free man is to enable him to make good use of his freedom—the time that is free for leisure and learning, for his personal growth, morally, intellectually, and spiritually, and for all the things that constitute living well, over and above merely earning a living.

Today, all men are in a position to enjoy the benefits of a good society as well as to exercise a voice in its affairs. All, therefore, are called upon to think for themselves about the problems germane to the good life and the good society, and to discuss these with their fellow-citizens. Today, all men are in a position to participate in the arts and sciences that constitute our culture as well as to contribute to their support and advancement. All, therefore, are called upon to cultivate themselves to the fullness of their capacities.

For all men to engage in the free life that is now open to all, liberal education—in school and after—has become a necessity for all. Our society is at work on the task of making liberal education available as an opportunity for all. But each of us has the individual task of seizing that opportunity for ourselves and our children, turning it to profit in our personal lives.

Men who have all the opportunities of freedom can, nevertheless, live like slaves. They can fail to think for themselves about the problems that affect their lives and their society. If they fail in this, their suffrage amounts to no more than saying "Ja" in a totalitarian state; and their lives are no more their own than if they were shaped by a tyrannical master or a benevolent despot. They can spend the greater part of their energies in obtaining the comforts and conveniences of life; and what is left of their lives they can fritter away in amusements which do little more for them than kill the time that hangs heavy on their hands. If they live this way, they either forego or dissipate their opportunities for leisure. In twentieth century America as well as in ancient Rome, those who live by bread and circuses alone live like slaves.

The mark of the free life is that one day is not like another; each year does not differ from its predecessor merely in the quantity of consumable goods or in the variety of pleasurable pastimes. The free life is a life of continual growth, in which the individual marks the passage of time by the stages of his own development. The goods it accumulates are the goods of leisure. They are not consumable from day to day. Such gains as knowledge, understanding, and wisdom endure through a lifetime. Its pleasures are as various as the accomplishments in which men can take enduring satisfaction. Instead of killing time, they fill time creatively to the lasting profit of the individual and his society.

Given the opportunity for a free life, the responsibility for using it to his own lasting profit ultimately falls upon each individual who is blessed with freedom. He forfeits his freedom if he relies on someone else to discharge it for him. He cannot sit back passively and expect the institutions of his society to confer the content of a free life upon him along with granting him the rights of citizenship and the privileges of leisure.

A free society can and must build schools, libraries, and museums, and open them to all. It can and must support and encourage the widespread dissemination of the arts and sciences, and every form of association that stimulates discussion and thought. But with all the things that public institutions make available to us, and even with a library in our own possession, which few free men in the past could afford, each of us remains individually responsible in our freedom for the uses we put that freedom to.

The greatest mistake anyone can make about liberal education is to suppose that it can be acquired, once and for all, in the course of one's youth and by passing through school and college. The Bachelor of Arts degree, when it is most conscientiously earned, certifies only that a young person has become proficient enough in the liberal arts, and sufficiently acquainted with the fields of liberal learning, to be able to go on learning for the rest of his life.

If the high school or college graduate does not go on learning after school and out of school, by himself through reading and with his fellowmen through discussion, then he might just as well not have gone through school at all. His liberal schooling is a wasted effort if the preparation

for a lifetime of learning does not bear fruit. This is what schoolboys do not know and, perhaps, cannot be expected to understand while they are still in school. They can be pardoned the illusion that, as they approach the moment of graduation, they are finishing their education. But no intelligent adult is subject to this illusion for long, once his formal schooling is completed.

He soon learns how little he knows and knows how much he has to learn. He soon comes to understand that if his education were finished with school, he, too, would be finished, so far as mental growth or maturity of understanding is concerned. With the years he realizes how very slowly any human being grows in wisdom. With this realization he recognizes that the reason why schooling cannot make young people wise is also the reason why it cannot complete their education. The fullness of time is required for both.

As seeds will not take root in shallow soil, so basic ideas do not take hold in immature minds. That is why the fruition of liberal learning occurs only in adult life if it takes place at all. That also is why the continuation of liberal learning is, perhaps, foremost among the activities of leisure, to which adults must devote their free time. A mature human being, furrowed by all the trials and experiences of life, is receptive to ideas as children are not. Only with the maturity that is produced by experience alone, comes that seriousness of purpose and that need for understanding which make any real depth of learning possible.

Even if all the great books were read in school and all the great ideas were discussed in classrooms, it would still be necessary for mature men and women to reread the books and to discuss the ideas in order to acquire some portion of the insight and the wisdom they can confer. Children can be trained in preparation for life and learning, but only adults are genuinely educable; for only adults are in a position to carry on the serious pursuits of life itself, among which learning is paramount.

This recognition of the advantages of being an adult should be as general as our recognition that adults can think better—more soundly and deeply—than children. Since that is so, they can also learn more soundly and deeply. An adult who tries to avoid understanding this truth about himself in order to avoid the responsibilities that go with it is blinding himself with the illusions of childhood. He can hardly be pardoned for a self-deception that is excusable only in the very young.

What every adult either does or should realize, then, is that he cannot be content with his schooling, however extensive or excellent it may have been. He must build on the foundations it gave him; he must increase his own intellectual stature by all forms of adult learning, but especially by going to the great books and the great ideas as the perennial sources of mature understanding and ripening wisdom in adult life.

What, in addition, parents ought to realize is that they should not rely wholly upon schools and teachers for even the initial stages of their children's liberal education. The home and the parent have a responsibility for guidance, stimulation, and aid to the learning of the child, without which the best schools and the best teachers often fail to make the most of natural talents and propensities. The child who goes to school or college from a home that has a substantial library, a home in which books of importance are read and fundamental ideas are discussed, is one in whom a sensitivity to things of the mind is inbred. A child so conditioned by a literate home is already on the highroad to learning and has a better chance than less fortunate classmates of going further *in school, in spite of school,* and *after school.*

Why is a lifetime needed for learning? Because the purpose of learning is growth, and our minds, unlike our bodies, can continue growing as we continue to live. We do not expect our bodies to stay alive and healthy without the daily sustenance of food and the continual invigoration of exercise. Why should we expect our minds to stay alive and vigorous without regular sustenance and exercise? Last year's or even yesterday's feeding will not suffice the body. Past reading and thinking will not suffice the mind either. Without exercise, the mind, no less readily than a muscle, atrophies. Without the sustenance it draws from ideas, the mind shrinks and withers.

To say that the great books and the great ideas are the prime sources of a liberal education is to say that they have the power to provide the sustenance and the exercise the human mind needs for a lifetime of growth. Their power is inexhaustible. This is the essence of their greatness.

Education as a process of mental growth is a process of rising to higher levels of understanding and insight. The great books are the instruments for elevating the mind. But they do not work on us by capillary attraction. We cannot sit back passively and hope to be lifted up simply by contemplating great books on the shelf. Using them as we would ropes, we must pull ourselves up. We must make the effort to read them and to gain skill in reading them. Though they are always over our head, they become easier and easier to read as we gain the skill. With every increment of skill, the pleasure and profit of reading them increases.

The great books are not the whole of a man's education. Experience counts for a great deal. Without experience no book is worth much. Other books than the great books, especially the best of contemporary ones, contain information and enlightenment which are necessary for a rounded education. To claim that the great books, without wide experience and other reading, will produce a soundly developed mind is to claim more than can be said in truth. It is quite enough to say what is simply true about them—that they are *indispensable* to a liberal education.

If experience were sufficient by itself, we would not have to read at all. If reading any book were as good as reading any other, we would not have to choose the books we read. We know that this is not so. Experience is not enough. It is also necessary to think reflectively, to ask questions, to seek answers. Reading what other men have thought helps us to think about our own experience.

It is here that the great books are so much better than all others. They raise the most fundamental questions about man and his world, and they propound the most fundamental answers. That is why the great books can help to make our experience more intelligible to us. They are the books we must read to make the most out of our experience and out of all the other things we read or hear or see. They illuminate whatever else we read. They enable us to examine whatever else we learn with a critical and questioning mind, without which we can make little sense of all the information we accumulate from day to day.

To become liberally educated involves more than becoming well-informed. It is not a process of burdening one's memory with more and more facts, but rather of deepening one's understanding with more and more relevant ideas. Ideas are needed to understand facts and to weigh them. A man is wise in proportion as he can judge facts in the light of principles and thereby understand what he knows.

On most of the great questions which have perplexed the human mind, there is not one answer, but many. The man who knows only one answer where others deserve to be considered lacks intellectual freedom. He cannot exercise a thoughtful choice. And one man has more freedom of thought than another in proportion as he is aware of the claims upon his judgment of all the relevant yet conflicting answers that the best minds have given to the problems every human being must face.

Lawful property is always more than physical possession. To say that something is a man's own is to say that it belongs to him by right—that he has a right to it, which he exercises when he uses or controls it. But the ownership of books as well as other things consists in more than having a legal right to their possession once they have been purchased.

A man can own a book in two ways. The first is the property right he establishes by paying for it, just as he pays for clothes and furniture. This act of purchase is only a prelude to the second, and deeper, sense in which he can own books. Books become a man's property in the full sense only when he has appropriated them mentally as well as legally. This he can do only by making them a part of himself. To make them his own, he must actually get them inside his mind.

When you pay for a beefsteak, you acquire the right to transfer it from the butcher's icebox to your own. But you have not made full use of the beefsteak until you consume it and get it into your bloodstream and to your tissues. Eating and digesting it is the process whereby you assimilate it to yourself. It is that which nourishes you, not just having something edible in your own refrigerator. What is true of beefsteaks is even more true of books, which are not so obviously consumable. Having something readable on your bookshelf does you no more good than

having something edible in your icebox. You have not made the books your own until you have made full use of them—by reading and understanding them and so getting them into your mind. After you have assimilated them in this way, they can always be returned to the bookshelf; for unlike food they are not consumed by use. And if they are great books, they always remain to be used again and again for further nourishment.

Confusion about what it means to *own* a book often gives us a mistaken notion of what is involved in making a book *our own*. We all know the satisfaction that we derive from buying books and having them on our shelves even if we do not read them. This is particularly true of the great books. We indulge in a kind of magic about them. We would like to possess them in the full sense of making them a part of ourselves through having digested them well. But we often permit ourselves to substitute economic possession—the kind of ownership that is represented by having the books within our grasp—for intellectual ownership. We substitute our sense of power over the physical book for a genuine grasp of its contents.

Having a fine library does not prove that its legal owner has a mind enriched by books. It proves only that he was rich enough to buy them. He may think that his bookplate pasted on their inner covers establishes his lordship over them; but if that is all he is concerned with, he has forgotten that what really counts is his mastery of the ideas they contain.

There are three kinds of book purchasers. The first has a handsome collection of volumes on his shelves—unread, untouched. He looks upon them as part of the furniture in his home and usually selects them for bindings that match the rest of the decor. The second has an interesting assortment of books which reveal his own varied interests—a few of them read through, most of them dipped into, but all of them clean and shiny as the day they were bought. He has not yet come to grips with them or made them an integral part of his mind. The third has a few books or many, but most of them are dog-eared and dilapidated, shaken and loosened by continual use, marked and scribbled in from front to back. This man has come into full ownership of his books. The kind of wear and tear they show indicates how much of their content has rubbed off on his mind.

In *How To Read A Book,* I tried to describe the process of learning how to read, not just for information or amusement, but for understanding and for the kind of entertainment that educates. I set forth, step by step, the things a person must do with his mind if he is to read skillfully books that require an effort to understand. I explained a dozen or more of the specific rules to be followed at various stages in the reading and rereading of any book that does not yield its message at a glance or to a cursory skimming of its pages.

These rules of reading do not apply equally to all kinds of reading matter. There is much in print that requires little more than the most rudimentary skill to read. The art of reading, as a skill essential to getting a liberal education, is obviously needed to a higher and higher degree in proportion as the materials read are capable of contributing to the growth of the mind. Precisely because they are the best materials of this sort, the great books call for a commensurate degree of skill.

Like any other skill, the art of reading is acquired by practice. But one does not increase in skill by repeating the same simple things over and over again, but rather by progressively putting one's effort into doing harder and more complicated things. That is why we cannot learn to read as well by reading books that require less of us than the great books do. They alone furnish us with the incentives and the occasions for increasing our skill to the utmost.

In reading, as in everything else, practice makes perfect and pleasure increases with skill. It takes effort and pain to acquire skill in doing the things that are most worth doing, but once the skill is acquired we find that we are able to do those things with effortless ease and pleasure.

All the skill or know-how needed for reading a worth-while book, and especially a great book, can be boiled down to *knowing how to keep awake while reading.* This involves more than keeping one's eyes open and remaining more or less conscious with a book in one's hand. It means keeping one's mind open and actively at work in the process of learning. The more active one is in reading, the more one stands to learn, for the more one puts one's mind into the book, the more one's mind takes from it.

There is one simple prescription for doing this. It is to ask questions while you read—questions which you yourself try to answer in the course of reading. The better the book, the more it will help you by provoking questions in your mind and challenging you to find and weigh the answers.

Marking a book, or making notes on a jot pad, while not indispensable to reading, is one sign that the reader is awake. Reading, if it is active, is thinking; and thinking tends to express itself in words, spoken or written. The marked book is usually the thought-through book. It is a visible record of questions raised and answers considered.

The man who has marked his books is loath to part with them, even to a borrower who promises to return them. A marked book is a kind of intellectual diary. Lending it is almost like giving one's mind away. Most of us would be less reluctant to lend our car or our coat; for the books we have read well and marked in the process are a part of ourselves, as much as our heads or hearts.

Whether a reader marks his books or not, he must, while reading, do the kind of thinking that might issue in a series of notes to himself about what he is beginning to understand and what remains to be understood. This is particularly true in reading a great book for the first time, and the best readers have found it true even after repeated rereadings. As more understanding is gained, something more always remains to be understood.

To say that the great books are indefinitely rereadable is just another way of saying that they are always over our head. Their thinking is always better than ours *is,* but never better than ours *can be.* Reading them is the process by which we keep trying to pull ourselves up to their level. Since education consists in the elevation of a mind by its betters, the great books are obviously the most effective instruments for the education of all of us—but only if we make the effort to read them actively and are not deterred by the fact that we cannot understand them perfectly on the first reading.

Herein lies one important difference between reading the great books and reading most other books. Everyone who can read can learn to read the great books. But no one who learns to read the great books can read them as he reads other books.

In reading the great books we must be prepared for a basic change in our habits of reading. We must not expect to understand a great book either perfectly or completely on the first reading. We should be quite satisfied if we learn a little, become acquainted with an unfamiliar idea, gain some insight into one of the great problems which have concerned human beings at all times. We should be most pleased if, in addition, we have formed some definite impression of the things which still beckon us on because we do not yet understand them, at least not well enough.

The familiar rule that a reader should not go on to the next page until he has mastered this one does not apply to the great books. In reading a great book the rule to follow is the very opposite. *Read them right through even though much remains obscure or incompletely grasped on the first reading.* What is unclear in some of the parts will become clear in the light of the whole. What is understood will become the basis for a second and more profitable reading later, as well as for understanding other great books more readily even on the first reading.

Reading one great book makes reading another easier, and the more we read *through* the great books or *in* them, the easier reading them well becomes. They gradually draw us into the great conversation they have created and thereby increase our power to converse with them, as well as our power to conduct the dialogue that must go on in our own minds whenever we are engaged in genuine learning.

There is one thing worse than not reading the great books. That is not wanting to. The man who doesn't read them and the man who doesn't want to are on a par, so far as the present level of their literacy is concerned. But if one were to wager on the chance of their improving their minds, the odds would be against the person who is unwilling to make the effort, and in favor of the person who wants to but finds the going difficult. With the will, the latter will find the way. ♦

THE SYNTOPICON

World's First Index of Great Ideas

The magnificent intellectual reference work of liberal education that gives an orderly means of access to the wisdom of the Great Books; 163,000 references to the Great Books classified, organized, indexed and cross-indexed; 3000 topics, representing 400,000 man-hours of research by 100 scholars over a period of eight years.

by Mortimer J. Adler

THE GREAT BOOKS are pre-eminently those which have given the Western tradition its life and light. The unity of the set does not consist merely in the fact that each member of it is a *Great Book* worth reading. A deeper unity exists in the relation of all the books to one tradition, a unity shown by the continuity of the discussion of common themes and problems. All the works in the *Great Books* are significantly related to one another and, taken together, they adequately present the ideas and issues, the terms and topics, that have made the Western tradition what it is. More than a collection of books, then, the *Great Books* are a certain kind of whole that can and should be read as such.

The Great Ideas results from and records such a reading of the *Great Books*. The aim of this "syntopical reading" was to discover the unity and continuity of Western thought in the discussion of common themes and problems from one end of the tradition to the other. The *Syntopicon* does not reproduce or present the results of this reading in a digest to save others the trouble of reading the *Great Books* for themselves. On the contrary, it only lays down the lines along which a syntopical reading of the *Great Books* can be done, and shows why and how it should be done. The various uses of the *Syntopicon* all derive from its primary purpose—to serve as a guide to the reading of the *Great Books of the Western World* as a unified whole.

The lines along which a syntopical reading of the *Great Books* can and should be done are the main lines of the continuous discussion that runs through the thirty centuries of Western civilization. This great conversation across the ages is a living organism whose structure the *Syntopicon* tries to articulate. It tries to show the many strands of this conversation between the greatest minds of Western civilization on the themes which have concerned men in every epoch, and which cover the whole range of man's speculative inquiries and practical interests.

It was with these considerations in mind that the Editors called *The Great Ideas*, a *Syntopicon* of the *Great Books*—literally, a collection of the topics which are the main themes of the conversation to be found in the books. A topic is a subject of discussion. It is a place at which minds meet—to agree or disagree, but at least to communicate with one another about some common concern. Just as a number of minds, or what they have to say, can be related by their relevance to a common theme, so a number of topics can be related by their relevance to a common term—a single concept or category which generates a number of problems or themes for discussion. Hence the *Syntopicon* is organized, first, by a listing of the ideas that are the important common terms of discussion; and, then, by an enumeration of the topics that are the various particular points about which the discussion of each of these ideas revolves.

The *Syntopicon* is the product of many minds working together for many years, men and women who labored almost day and night to produce it. It was not their hard work, it was their persistent devotion to a task which many times seemed too difficult to see through, that created the *Syntopicon*. What is striking about this fact is that it occurred in the sphere of ideas. We are accustomed to such collaboration in the laboratory or in other phases of experimental research. But we tend to think of philosophical inquiry or humanistic study as an individual creative effort.

It is clear that the *Syntopicon* could not have been produced without collaboration on a grand scale. The *Syntopicon's* 163,000 references to the *Great Books*, assembled under 3,000 topics, represent about 400,000 man-hours of reading. That would be over 70 years of continuous reading, day and night, seven days a week, week in and week out from birth on.

While the *Syntopicon* demonstrates the possibility and profit of intellectual collaboration in the sphere of the liberal arts, the humanities, and philosophy, it also demonstrates concretely and vividly the reality of the great conversation.

The "great conversation" is a phrase—I do not know whether it was invented by Robert Hutchins or Scott Buchanan—that we have all been using to signify the dramatic character of the intellectual tradition of the West. As Hutchins has pointed out in his essay, *The Great Conversation*, our civilization is distinctively the civilization of the dialogue. Our tradition is one long multilinear conversation about many connected themes—a conversation in which all the great minds of our

civilization have taken part and in which we, too, must participate if we are to become intellectually mature.

"The great conversation"—"The civilization of the dialogue"—these are fine phrases and they call fine images to mind. All of us who have spent much time reading and discussing the *Great Books* have some sense of their reality. But are they true?

The *Syntopicon* answers questions simply and plainly by actually recording the great conversation in all its concrete details. As the name suggests, the *Syntopicon* is a collection of topics. These are the themes or topics of the great conversation about the basic problems and issues that have always confronted mankind.

Hence if we follow, under any one of the 3,000 topics, the references to the *Great Books* in their chronological order, we will be actually following a line of the great conversation from beginning to end. By reading the passages referred to, we can actually hear the voices in that conversation as they discuss one of its major themes, talking with and often against one another.

By demonstrating the reality of the great conversation, the *Syntopicon* gives substance to a moving insight into the spirit and process of our cultural tradition. In doing so, it also provides us with the means of acquiring some of the funded wisdom of the West by participating in the great conversation.

I venture to predict that many uses for the *Syntopicon* will be discovered, which its makers never dreamed of. For example, its use to turn out Ph.D.'s with even less effort or originality than they now take. That isn't a dream, of course; that's a nightmare.

There are several uses of the *Syntopicon*: It enables the beginning reader of the *Great Books* to open the books and read in them on any subject in which he may be interested—and to do this long before he has read all the books all the way through. It provides what we have come to think of as a third basic reference book, serving in the field of thought and opinion as the dictionary serves us in the field of language and as an encyclopaedia like *Britannica* serves us in the field of facts. It gives students and scholars an instrument of research in the history and dialectic of ideas.

These uses you have heard about. I want now to concentrate attention upon two that may not have been so frequently or so widely mentioned —two that are of the deepest concern to all of us as citizens of the republic of letters and of liberty. The first of these can be summarized by saying that the *Syntopicon* makes an important kind of reading available to everyone—a kind of reading that too few of us now do. That kind of reading is topical reading. It consists in reading in a whole series of books in relation to one another as all together are relevant to a single topic or subject of interest. It thus differs from integral reading, which consists in reading through a single book, in, by, and for itself.

Both kinds of reading are important. Both are necessary. Each is needed to supplement the other. To do either one alone is not to get all out of books that they contain. To know how to read a book is not enough. We must learn how to read two books—or two hundred—together as they are related by their common theme. Most of us do only integral reading. We read, or at least try to read, whole books through. Few of us do much topical reading, if any at all. Such reading has been the privilege and pleasure of scholars.

I might add that lawyers have the experience of topical reading when they read a whole series of cases on a single point of law. And *Corpus Juris* is the indispensable reference work that enables them to do such reading. Perhaps, then, the most striking way to indicate this value of the *Syntopicon* is to say that what *Corpus Juris* does for the legal profession, the *Syntopicon* will do for everyone. It will make it possible for everyone to do, much more easily than before, topical reading on all the subjects of general human interest and common discourse. It will thus extend the reading power and habits of men.

The other value of the *Syntopicon* can best be indicated by explaining how the *Syntopicon* functions as a liberator of the human mind. The *Syntopicon* liberates the human mind from drudgery. The 400,000 man-hours of reading and the more than 400,000 man-hours of work that was done to produce it frees all of us of the necessity of having to scratch, dig, and hunt in order to find what, with the *Syntopicon*, we can begin at once to read.

The *Syntopicon* does nobody's reading or thinking for him. It merely puts him in a better position to do that for himself. This point can be most emphatically made by comparing the *Syntopicon* as a thinking machine with the great flexible comptometers. The human mind feeds the comptometer the data, and the machine does the thinking and returns the answers. The *Syntopicon* feeds the human mind the data or materials of thought—the positions taken by the best minds on every major question—and leaves the individual free to think about these and to decide for himself where the truth lies.

Perhaps it is for this reason that the eminent French philosopher and scholar, Etienne Gilson, wrote me that he considered the *Syntopicon*, "a typically 'American' Masterpiece." There was no trace of irony in calling it "American," he said. "Even metaphysical reflection," he pointed out, "can be helped in a material way; and if not by means of a calculating machine, then by a machine collecting the data of thought." The *Syntopicon* is precisely such a machine.

The *Syntopicon* helps to liberate its users from partial or partisan views of the Western tradition. Most of us tend to be, in one way or another, particularistic rather than universal in our allegiance to and understanding of our intellectual tradition. We have sectarian or parochial or epochal limitations of vision or interest. We see the part as the whole or regardless of the whole. By keeping the whole always in full view, the *Syntopicon* may help to cure such intellectual blindness as is represented by modernism or mediaevalism or antiquarianism; or any of countless other isms that are besetting ills of the human mind.

The *Syntopicon* may liberate the mind from the particular prejudices that infest it with regard to any question, of which it knows only one side. The dogmatism of the closed mind can be cured only by opening it up to other views than its own and exposing it to the range of arguments on the other side. This the *Syntopicon* can do for its users on most of the major issues that confront us today.

At this moment in our national life, the *Syntopicon* may help in the fight for freedom of thought and discussion. It is, therefore, singularly appropriate that Senator William Benton should be its publisher. He made a distinguished and noble effort to stem the tide of McCarthyism which, in government and in mass action, threatened freedom of speech and discussion in this country. But even the McCarthy's of this world cannot choke freedom of thought by lies and intimidation or by the coercive force of fear and mass hysteria. Freedom of thought is an inner, an inviolable freedom. It can be impaired, even destroyed, but only by ignorance, not by fear or force; for we exercise freedom in thinking only when we are in a position to choose among the possible intellectual alternatives. In proportion as we are ignorant of what can be thought on any subject, we are limited in our exercise of freedom of thought about it.

We are ourselves responsible for the degree to which we exercise freedom of thought. We are responsible to ourselves for becoming conversant with the alternative views on any basic question, in order to choose the best among them. Whether because of indolence or indifference or because of the great difficulty of the task itself, most of us pay lip-service of freedom of thought, for we do not make the requisite effort to enjoy its exercise.

Hence even if freedom of speech and discussion were fully restored in this country by the efforts of those who, like Senator Benton, were willing to risk their positions and reputations to fight McCarthyism in all its forms, that by itself would not suffice for the vital substance of free speech consists of the conclusions and decisions reached by free inquiry and with freedom of thought.

The *Syntopicon* plays its part in the crisis of our times. On the major questions of our day, it will give us perspective on the issues and acquaint us with arguments on various sides. Precisely because it presents us with the full range of intellectual alternatives, it activates the exercise of freedom of thought. It calls upon us to make up our own minds and to decide things for ourselves, not as a matter of prevalent prejudice, but through the free exercise of reason in the light of whatever wisdom is available to us. If we as people do that, as our ancestors once did, we have nothing to fear from either the external or the internal enemies of democracy, the free society, and the free life. ♦

WHAT IS AN IDEA?

by Mortimer J. Adler

IDEAS are my business. I've been at it forty years now, and I have not yet found a new idea. But the old ones — and I am just getting started on some of them — have kept me going. And, in all this I have come to some conclusions and, I believe, a clearer notion not only of what an idea is but of what it is not.

It is not just a word, nor is it a string of words. Words are performing their highest function when they express ideas, but they do not constitute the ideas they express. This is clearly shown by the fact that different persons all using the same word may not have the same comprehension of the idea which that word expresses.

Consider the word "love." It has many meanings which we recognize as soon as we consider the difference between romantic love and conjugal love, the difference between love of country and love of God, or the difference between the love that parents readily bestow upon their children and the love that children slowly develop for their parents. All these meanings of the word—all these kinds of love—have something in common. All are related aspects of a single, very large idea—the idea of love. But as most people employ the word in ordinary speech, they have only a small part of this idea in mind; and when young people use it, they seldom have in mind the same part that older people have. Few who use the word ever have the whole idea in mind, for it takes a lifetime of experience and thought to comprehend it fully.

An idea is not a fact of any kind, nor a collection of facts, no matter how massive or recondite. The telephone book is full of facts, but it doesn't contain a single idea. A history book is full of facts, none of which is an idea, though if the writer is given to philosophizing about history he may illuminate the facts with some basic idea, such as the idea of progress, the idea of chance, or the idea of fate. Suppose we are dealing with the idea of "progress," in itself abstract and general. To grasp it, we consider one example after another, each a concrete or particular instance of the essential idea. We look at the changes that have been made in transportation to increase comfort and speed. We call attention to the advances that have been made in the conquest of disease. We may even point to improvements in certain social or political institutions, such as the treatment of criminals or the protection of human rights. But none of these things is the idea of progress, though each may exemplify it. Moreover, if we did not have some idea of progress in the first place, we would not have chosen these examples to illustrate what we have in mind and to hold that idea before us.

Ideas influence our actions no less than feelings, desires, emotions, and purposes do, but not in the same way. Our particular passions or desires determine the attitudes we take and move us to the things we do. But if we ever recognize the discrepancy between what we do and what we ought to do, we are moved by ideas, not passions. Particular loves and hates may lead us to befriend certain minority groups and persecute others. But if we ever question such discrimination—our own or someone else's—we do so in virtue of ideas about love and man (especially insights about the fraternity and equality of men) that move us to judge our attitudes, and even perhaps to overcome our prejudices.

An idea alters and grows. Having a life, it can have a history—a past, present, and future. Each of the great ideas is a complex and organic whole, a dissectible structure of related parts. It has an interior, and in this sense it is like a domain which can be probed, pried into, explored, approached from many angles, taken apart in many ways.

Ideas may look alike from the outside, but the more we look into them the more we find that each is a world of its own, with its own special history and its own special structure. Yet each also belongs to a vaster world or universe of thought in which ideas group themselves as so many constellations or galaxies. In themselves and in relation to one another they comprise the configurations of the human mind, as intricate and varied in their criss-crossing patterns as the starry heavens. And like each individual star, every idea is a source of life and light which animates and illuminates the words, facts, examples, and emotions that are dead—or deadly—and dark without them. The more fully one investigates any great idea, the more one has to delve into others. The pursuit is endless—and fascinating.

None of these things would be true if ideas were words, or facts, or examples, or feelings. Nor would words, facts, examples, or feelings play the roles that they do in human life if ideas did not intervene to give them meaning and direction. Apart from ideas, great or small, they would not be discussable, interpretable, or even relateable. But while all ideas have the properties mentioned, the nature of ideas is most clearly seen in the case of the relatively small number of great ideas which are the main points of reference in the universe of human thought.

None of the 102 great ideas is a recent discovery in the sense in which there are really new inventions in every age. The ancient Greeks had a name for every one of them. All have been objects of speculation and inquiry since the beginning of thought. They have always been the common stock of the human mind. Innumerable men have engaged in the discussion of each one of them. The vast literature which exists on every great idea reflects not only the continuity of human thought about them, but also the wide diversity of opinions to which such thought inevitably gives rise. In the sphere of the great ideas we can find all the fundamental disagreements—and agreements—of mankind.

When I say that there are no new ideas—or no great ones that are new—I do not mean that there is nothing new in the world of ideas. On the contrary, most of the great ideas have kept on changing and growing in substance and scope, to whatever extent thinking men have been at work on them century after century. Unlike facts, which remain fixed for all time once they are established, the great ideas, once discovered in the dim past, remain the same in the way in which living organisms remain the same while developing.

In every epoch, intellectual geniuses have added not new ideas but new facets to the same enduring ones. Some of the great ideas have been more energetically or creatively pursued at certain periods or places than at others. Ideas like Prophecy or Angel have had a livelier history in antiquity or the Middle Ages than in modern times. The opposite is true of such ideas as Progress and Evolution. But the lineage of these goes back to antiquity. As Mark Twain wryly observed, "The ancients stole all our ideas from us."

Whether we know it or not, we are all philosophers. We all think—well or sloppily, enthusiastically or inattentively. The slightest sense-perception—a falling leaf, a twinkling star, a smiling child—awakens our minds as well as arouses our feelings, and forces us to ask: Why? What? Whence? Whither?

Not to engage in this pursuit of ideas is to live like ants instead of like men. The ant can live without ideas because the whole course of its life is fixed. But man has the freedom—and therefore the necessity—to choose and to choose in terms of ideas.

We often think of ourselves as living in a world which no longer has any unexplored frontiers. We speak of pioneering as a thing of the past. But in doing so we forget that the greatest adventure of all still challenges us—what Mr. Justice Holmes called "the adventure of the human mind." Men may be hemmed in geographically, but every generation stands on the frontiers of the mind. In the world of ideas, there is always pioneering to be done, and it can be done by anyone who will use the equipment with which he is endowed. The great ideas belong to everyone. ♦

The Great Ideas are the conceptions by which we think about things. They are the terms in which we state fundamental problems; they are the notions we employ in defining issues and discussing them. They represent the principal content of our thought. They are what we think as well as what we think about.—MORTIMER J. ADLER

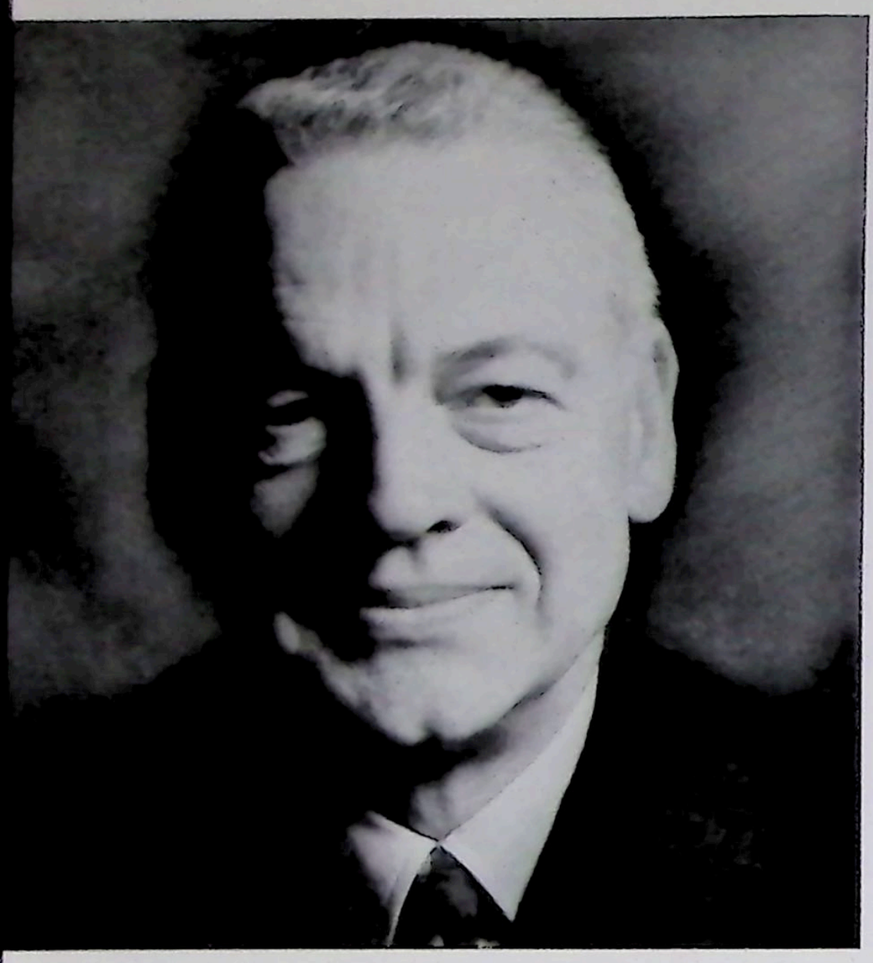
THE 102 GREAT IDEAS

The Great Ideas—A Syntopicon.

ANGEL
ANIMAL
ARISTOCRACY
ART
ASTRONOMY
BEAUTY
BEING
CAUSE
CHANCE
CHANGE
CITIZEN
CONSTITUTION
COURAGE
CUSTOM AND CONVENTION
DEFINITION
DEMOCRACY
DESIRE
DIALECTIC
DUTY
EDUCATION
ELEMENT
EMOTION
ETERNITY
EVOLUTION
EXPERIENCE
FAMILY
FATE
FORM
GOD
GOOD AND EVIL
GOVERNMENT
HABIT
HAPPINESS
HISTORY
HONOR
HYPOTHESIS
IDEA
IMMORTALITY
INDUCTION
INFINITY
JUDGMENT
JUSTICE
KNOWLEDGE
LABOR
LANGUAGE
LAW
LIBERTY
LIFE AND DEATH
LOGIC
LOVE
MAN
MATHEMATICS
MATTER
MECHANICS
MEDICINE
MEMORY AND IMAGINATION
METAPHYSICS
MIND
MONARCHY
NATURE
NECESSITY AND CONTINGENCY
OLIGARCHY
ONE AND MANY
OPINION
OPPOSITION
PHILOSOPHY
PHYSICS
PLEASURE AND PAIN
POETRY
PRINCIPLE
PROGRESS
PROPHECY
PRUDENCE
PUNISHMENT
QUALITY
QUANTITY
REASONING
RELATION
RELIGION
REVOLUTION
RHETORIC
SAME AND OTHER
SCIENCE
SENSE
SIGN AND SYMBOL
SIN
SLAVERY
SOUL
SPACE
STATE
TEMPERANCE
THEOLOGY
TIME
TRUTH
TYRANNY
UNIVERSAL AND PARTICULAR
VIRTUE AND VICE
WAR AND PEACE
WEALTH
WILL
WISDOM
WORLD

ROBERT M. HUTCHINS

Editor-in-Chief, Great Books of the Western World



by the Editors of Wisdom

ROBERT MAYNARD HUTCHINS is one of America's most prominent educators. He is President of the Fund for the Republic and Chairman of the Consultants, Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions; Chairman of the Board of Editors, Encyclopaedia Britannica; Editor-in-Chief, Great Books of the Western World. He is best known for his bold and pioneering concepts in educational theory and administration, his indefatigable crusade for *Great Books* as the foundation of a liberal education, his editorial and research projects in association with the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and the *Great Books of the Western World,* his courageous and sometimes militant advocacy of controversial and unpopular causes, and his brilliant, witty, and fearless public utterances.

Educated at Oberlin College and Yale University, he is the son of a Presbyterian preacher who was also a professor of homiletics (pulpit oratory), and has been around and about colleges all his life. He began his public career as Dean of the Yale Law School and Professor of Law in 1928. In 1929, at the age of 30, he became President of the University of Chicago, one of the world's greatest universities, where his program of reform catalyzed a general reinvestigation of the foundations of humanistic education. Here he performed the Herculean task of changing the basis of American educational thinking from the narrowly specialized to the liberal. He educated his university and his country by educating himself. He read the *Great Books,* assigning himself the task, at the very outset of his administrative career, of teaching them to both adolescents and adults. The liberal education for which he crusaded is the education he wants every child and every adult to have, for liberal education, he believes, liberates the mind for any and all activities in every field. He served as President of the University for 16 years. In 1945 he became Chancellor of the University, in which position he remained until his resignation in 1951, when he left to join the Ford Foundation as Associate Director.

Hutchins is the author of many works on contemporary education, the titles of which indicate the range of his interests and convictions: *No Friendly Voice, The Higher Learning in America, Education for Freedom, St. Thomas and the World State, Morals, Religion, and the Higher Education, The Conflict in Education in a Democratic Society, Freedom, Education and the Fund.*

Hutchins is now President of the Fund for the Republic and Chairman of the Consultants, Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions. The Fund, an independent foundation commenced in 1953 under the initial auspices of the Ford Foundation, is an organization dedicated to positive support and protection of the Bill of Rights, the exploration of those areas in which those Rights appear to be in jeopardy, and the education of the American people to a more profound understanding of the responsibilities those Rights entail. The Fund supports activities directed toward the elimination of restrictions on freedom of thought, inquiry and expression in the United States, and develops policies and procedures best adapted to protect those Rights in the face of persistent international tension.

"The Fund," states Hutchins, "is a foundation seeking to defend and advance the principles of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. The methods by which it does this are studies, reports, and popular education. The studies and reports are designed to show what the facts are with regards to some alleged success or failure in the field of Civil Liberties. The program of popular education is designed to remind the people of their civil liberties and to bring to their attention the state of those liberties today. The studies and reports are made by the best qualified persons or organizations that the Fund can find. All that the Fund does is to decide on the problem, the individual or group that should make the study and the amount of money that should go into it. The Fund has never at any time indicated to anyone conducting any investigation any desire to influence its content or conclusions in any way.

In November, 1959, the Fund established in Santa Barbara, California, a Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions. The Center is an outgrowth of the Basic Issues Program of the Fund, the aim of which has been to clarify the issues involved in maintaining a free and just society in the second half of the 20th Century, and to advance the understanding of those issues by promoting discussion of them among the American people.

Hutchins, as an educator and an administrator of educators, believes that his role as President of the Fund for the Republic and Chairman of the Consultants, Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, is a normal and valid public expression of his lifelong concern for freedom, justice, and education. Famous as a fighter for freedom at every level, he places the *Great Books* as the center of the development of a free man.

FROM THE WISDOM OF HUTCHINS

If the American people honored wisdom and goodness as they now honor power and success, the system of universal free education would be quite different from what it is today.

The purpose of education is to develop a good mind. Everybody should have equal access to the kind of education most likely to develop such a mind and should have it for as long as it takes to acquire enough intellectual excellence to fix once and for all the vision of the continuous need for more and more intellectual excellence.

The university should be the symbol of the highest powers and aspirations of mankind.

It is time to take education away from the scholars and school teachers and to open the gates of the republic of learning to those who can and will make it responsible to humanity. Learning is in principle and should be in fact the highest common good, to be defended as a right and worked for as an end. All men are capable of learning, according to their abilities. Learning does not stop as long as a man lives, unless his learning power atrophies because he does not use it. Political freedom cannot last without provision for the free unlimited acquisition of knowledge. Truth is not long retained in human affairs without continual learning and re-learning. A political order is tyrannical if it is not rational.

We should establish a national system of scholarships that makes it possible for every citizen of this country to be educated to the limit of his mental capacity, regardless of the financial capacity of his parents.

The weirdest reading available in the United States today is the catalogues of our colleges and universities, with all those entries about how to get married, how to get a job, and how to attain peace of mind.

The prospect that television opens before us in America, with nobody speaking and nobody reading, suggests that a bleak and torpid epoch may lie ahead in which the population will eventually sink, in accordance with the principles of evolution, to the level of the lowest forms of vegetable life.

It seems to me that higher education probably cannot teach prudence or practical wisdom, that habit of the mind by which we select the right means to the end. Nor can it, I believe, teach good habits of action. It cannot teach morals.

You can set no store by your education in childhood and youth, no matter how good it was. Childhood and youth are no time to get an education. The most that we can hope for from these uninteresting and chaotic periods of life is that during them we shall be set on the right path, the path of realizing our human possibilities through intellectual effort and aesthetic appreciation. The great issues, now issues of life and death for civilization, call for mature minds.

The aim of liberal education is human excellence, both private and public (for man is a political animal). Its object is the excellence of man as man and man as citizen. It regards man as an end, not as a means; and it regards the ends of life, and not the means to it. For this reason it is the education of free men.

True education is the improvement of men through helping them learn to think for themselves.

The leading characteristic of educational institutions today is aimlessness.

Although I have known several astronomers who were contributing to the international journals before the age of sixteen, I have never known a child of any age who had much that was useful to say about the organization of human society or the ends of human life. The great books of ethics, political philosophy, economics, history, and literature do not yield up their secrets to the immature. In the United States, if these works are read at all, they are read in school and college, where they can be only dimly understood, and are never read again. Hence Americans are unlikely to understand them fully; we are deprived of the light they might shed upon our present problems. A concern with liberal education for all adults is necessary if we are to have liberal education for anybody; because liberal education can flourish in the schools, colleges, and universities of a country only if the adult population understands and values it.

The best definition of a university that I have been able to think of is that it is a center of independent thought. It may be a good many other things as well; but, if it is not this, it has failed.

Educators ought to know better than their pupils what an education is. If educators do not, they have wasted their lives. The art of teaching consists in large part of interesting people in things that ought to interest them, but do not. The task of educators is to discover what an education is and then to invent the methods of interesting their students in it.

The liberally educated man has a mind that can operate well in all fields. He may be a specialist in one field. But he can understand anything important that is said in any field and can see and use the light that it sheds upon his own. The liberally educated man is at home in the world of ideas and in the world of practical affairs, too, because he understands the relation of the two. He may not be at home in the world of practical affairs in the sense of liking the life he finds about him; but he will be at home in that world in the sense that he understands it. He may even derive from his liberal education some conception of the difference between a bad world and a good one and some notion of the ways in which one might be turned into the other.

Justice and freedom; discussion and criticism; intelligence and character—these are the indispensable ingredients of the democratic state. We can be rich and powerful without them. But not for long.

Man is a learning animal. The state is an association the primary aim of which is the virtue and intelligence of the people. Men learn by discussion, through the clash of opinion. The best and most progressive society is that in which expression is freest.

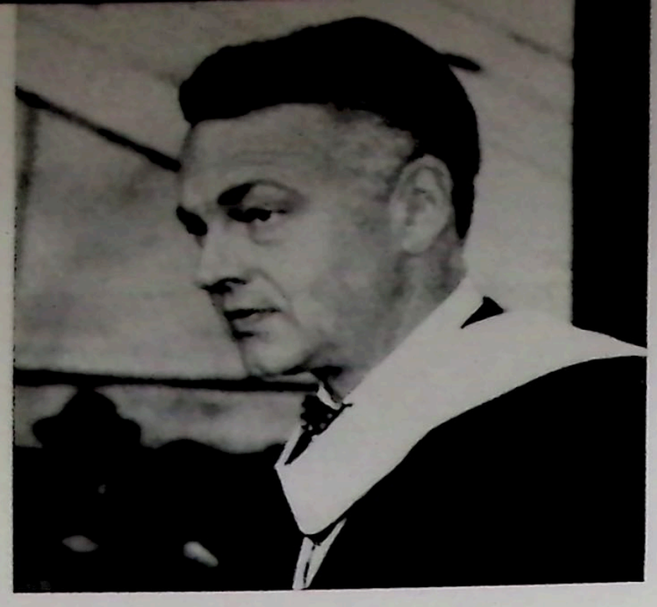
You may well think that you cannot educate your own children. My parents thought that they could not educate theirs, and I often think that I cannot educate mine. But parents can educate themselves, and children are always willing to help educate their parents. What you must remember is that your children cannot help to educate you without learning something themselves.

The content of liberal education is the greatest ideas that the greatest men have had, regardless of the time at which they lived or the kind of society they lived in.

The liberally educated man comprehends the ideas that are relevant to the basic problems and that operate in the basic fields of subject matter. He knows what is meant by soul, state, God, beauty, and by the other terms that are basic to the discussion of fundamental issues. He has some notion of the insights that these ideas, singly or in combination, provide concerning human experience.

Civilization is the deliberate pursuit of a common ideal. Education is the deliberate attempt to form men in terms of an ideal. A materialistic civilization cannot last. An education that attempts to form men in terms of a materialistic ideal cannot save them or their civilization.

Let us remember that Socrates and Gandhi did not seek to adapt themselves to society as they found it. They attempted to re-make society, and the fact that they died in the attempt in no way detracts from their glory or from their value as examples to other men.



FROM THE WISDOM OF HUTCHINS

Our conception of the aims of education depends upon our philosophy in general. Philosophy is moribund throughout the world; and Americans are of all peoples the least inclined to philosophize. The most eminent philosophers who have lived in America in the last fifty years were Whitehead and Santayana, who were foreigners, and Dewey, whose philosophy is not a philosophy at all.

We must admit that what is honored in America is material success. All you have to do to understand this is to compare the position of intellectuals and artists in America with their position in Europe. The model American is the successful businessman. Artists and intellectuals are regarded in the light of charity patients or excess baggage. Consequently the attention of the American is drawn at an early date to the necessity of adjusting himself to his economic environment in such a way that he will be successful.

To put an end to the spirit of inquiry that has characterized the West it is not necessary to burn the books. All we have to do is leave them unread for a few generations. On the other hand, the revival of interest in great books from time to time throughout history has provided the West with new drive and creativeness. Great books have salvaged, preserved, and transmitted the tradition on many occasions similar to our own. The books contain not merely the tradition, but also the great exponents of the tradition. Their writings are models of the fine and liberal arts. They hold before us what Whitehead called "the habitual vision of greatness." These books have endured because men in every era have been lifted beyond themselves by their example.

Even if the individual has had the best possible liberal education in youth, interminable education through great books and the liberal arts remains his obligation; he cannot expect to store up an education in childhood that will last all his life. What he can do in youth is to acquire the disciplines and habits that will make it possible for him to continue to educate himself all his life. One must agree with John Dewey in this: That continued growth is essential to intellectual life.

The ideal man is one who is willing to learn, but who thinks for himself; who respects the convictions of others, but who will stand up for his own against any power whatever.

Great books are the means of understanding our society and ourselves. They contain the great ideas that dominate us without our knowing it. There is no comparable repository of our tradition.

The infinite suggestiveness of great books leads us to other books, other thoughts, other questions. Great books enlarge the fund of ideas we have and relate themselves to those we possess. Since the suggestiveness of great books is infinite, we cannot get to the end of them. We cannot say we understand these books in the sense that we are finished with them.

Knowledge is not information. The characteristic of knowledge is organization.

The important problems of American education are intellectual, not financial.

The liberally educated man understands, by understanding the distinctions and interrelations of the basic fields of subject matter, the differences and connections between poetry and history, science and philosophy, theoretical and practical science; he understands that the same methods cannot be applied in all these fields; he knows the methods appropriate to each.

I do not believe that men can solve the problems raised by their own aggregation unless they can learn to think for themselves about the fundamental issues of human life and organized society.

All men are capable of learning. Learning does not stop as long as a man lives, unless his learning power atrophies because he does not use it. Political freedom cannot endure unless it is accompanied by provision for the unlimited acquisition of knowledge. Truth is not long retained in human affairs without continual learning and re-learning. Peace is unlikely unless there are continuous, unlimited opportunities for learning and unless men continuously avail themselves of them. The world of law and justice for which we yearn, the world-wide political republic, cannot be realized without the world-wide republic of learning. The civilization we seek will be achieved when all men are citizens of the world republic of law and justice and of the republic of learning all their lives long.

Most of the important things that human beings ought to understand cannot be comprehended in youth.

To solve a problem it is necessary to think. It is necessary to think even to decide what facts to collect.

Liberal education consists of training in the liberal arts and of understanding the leading ideas that have animated mankind. It aims to help the human being learn to think for himself, to develop his highest human powers.

Our real problems are concealed from us by our current remarkable prosperity, which results in part from the production of arms that we do not expect to use, and in part from our new way of getting rich, which is to buy things from one another that we do not want at prices we cannot pay on terms we cannot meet because of advertising we do not believe.

We might as well make up our minds to it. If our hopes of democracy are to be realized, every citizen of this country is going to have to be educated to the limit of his capacity. And I don't mean trained, amused, exercised, accommodated, or adjusted. I mean that his intellectual power must be developed. A good way to start finding the money that is needed for education would be to kick out of it the subjects, the activities, and the people that make no contribution to the development of intellectual power.

Our educational system has given us no resources that we can employ to give our leisure time significance. When we are not working, all we can do is to amuse ourselves. The deep and permanent melancholia that underlies the American temperament must be ascribed, in part at least, to the boredom that the perpetual search for amusement at length induces.

How can a man call himself educated who does not grasp the leading ideas that since the dawn of history have animated mankind?

Great books are great teachers; they are showing us every day what ordinary people are capable of. These books came out of ignorant, inquiring humanity. They are usually the first announcements of success in learning. Most of them were written for, and addressed to, ordinary people. If many great books seem unreadable and unintelligible to the most learned as well as to the dullest, it may be because we have not for a long time learned to read by reading them. Great books teach people not only how to read them, but also how to read all other books. This is not to say that any great book is altogether free from difficulty. As Aristotle remarked, learning is accompanied by pain. There is a sense in which every great book is always over the head of the reader; he can never fully comprehend it. That is why the great books are infinitely re-readable. That is why these books are great teachers; they demand the attention of the reader and keep his intelligence on the stretch.

It takes imaginative and intellectual work to read a book, and facility and achievement grow by exercise.

We have repeated to ourselves so much of late the slogan, "America must be strong," that we have forgotten what strength is. We appear to believe that strength consists of masses of men and machines. I do not deny that they have their role. But surely the essential ingredients of strength are trained intelligence, love of country, the understanding of its ideals, and such devotion to those ideals that they become a part of the thought and life of every citizen. We cannot hope to make ourselves intelligible to the rest of the world unless we understand ourselves.

The liberally educated man understands the relation between the problem of the immortality of the soul and the problem of the best form of government; he understands that the one problem cannot be solved by the same method as the other, and that the test that he will have to bring to bear upon solutions proposed differs from one problem to the other.

The object of liberal education in youth is not to teach the young all they will ever need to know. It is to give them the habits, ideas, and techniques that they need to continue to educate themselves. Thus the object of formal institutional liberal education in youth is to prepare the young to educate themselves throughout their lives.

Higher education supplies the intellectual foundations of morals and religion.

A man must use his mind; he must feel that he is doing something that will develop his highest powers and contribute to the development of his fellow men, or he will cease to be a man.

What makes great books great is, among other things, that they teach you something every time you read them. Every time you see something you had not seen before, you understand something you had missed; no matter how hard your mind worked before, it works again. And this is the point: Every man's mind ought to keep working all his life long; every man's imagination should be touched as often as possible by the great works of imagination; every man ought to push toward the horizons of his intellectual powers all the time. It is impossible to have "had" a liberal education, except in a formal, accidental, immaterial sense. Liberal education ought to end only with life itself.

Moral and religious education is more important than intellectual education.

It is more important to be good than to be intellectual, and it is hard, if not impossible, to be good without being religious.

The people now have political power and leisure. If they have not always used them wisely, it may be because they have not had the kind of education that would enable them to do so.

A liberal education aims to develop the powers of understanding and judgment. It is impossible that too many people can be educated in this sense, because there cannot be too many people with understanding and judgment.

We spend more on liquor, tobacco, and cosmetics than on education.

Only if we get our philosophy straight can we think straight about education.

What the modern, industrial, scientific democracy requires is wisdom. The aim of liberal education is wisdom.

The man who stops learning is as good as dead.

It is necessary to believe that philosophy is something more than words and that it is possible to be rational and religious at the same time.

Our reliance is upon the intelligence and character of the independent individual. The greatest dangers to the ideals that we cherish are fear and conformity. Courage and independence are the best guarantees of freedom and justice. We cannot feel free and feel frightened.

Prudence or practical wisdom is a habit of the practical intellect.

It is not merely inevitable that we are different and have different views; it is desirable that this should be so. From the clash of opinion truth emerges, and the human race advances.

The only defense that any nation can have is the character and intelligence of its people.

The history and tradition of our country make it plain that the essence of the American way of life is its hospitality to criticism, protest, unpopular opinions, and independent thought. The great American word has always been freedom, and, in particular, freedom of thought, speech, and assembly. Asserting the dignity of man, and of every man, America has proclaimed and protected the freedom to differ. America has grown strong on criticism. It would be quite as consistent with the American way of life to offer prizes for the most penetrating criticism of our country as it would be to offer prizes to those who have done the best job of advertising it. The heart of democracy is independent criticism; the basic freedom is freedom of thought and expression.

Perhaps the greatest idea that America has given the world is the idea of education for all. The world is entitled to know whether this idea means that everybody can be educated, or only that everybody must go to school.

The tragedy in America is that economics, ethics, politics, history, and literature are studied in youth, and seldom studied again.

Since we cannot hope to insulate our young people from access to the false doctrines in the world, the thing to do is to train them so that they can see the falsity in them. This means helping them learn to think for themselves.

The basic educational question is, how are we to equip every citizen to cope to the best of his ability with the problems of the modern world?

It is true that there is a rumor going around that education may be helpful in making you a millionaire, but where this is believed, it is taken to mean vocational, not intellectual, education.

The purpose of freedom is the development of the individual and of society. Government must leave the citizen to think, to speak, to pray, and, within suitable limits, to act for himself. Discussion and criticism are indispensable to progress. At the basis of discussion and criticism lies thought. Academic groups are established for the express purpose of thinking, which involves discussion and criticism.

The rule of the majority without free discussion and criticism is tyranny.

The public should understand education. And it would do no harm if teachers and professors understood it, too.

The result of the emphasis on vocational training in America is poor mechanics without education.

Literacy involves far more than merely the ability to read and write. Many people are not literate, in the full sense of the word, who can read and write very well. The kind of literacy that means something, however, is the kind that produces intelligent thought and action. It is this kind of literacy that you want your children to have. Unfortunately, their chances of acquiring it in the schools today are small and may become still smaller if schools become more and more narrowly technical and vocational.

As a sound philosophy in general teaches us that men are rational beings, so the educational philosophy dependent on it tells us that though men can be assisted to learn, they can learn only by themselves.

The wisdom of the world lies open to you—just waiting for you to tap it.

MORTIMER J. ADLER

Associate Editor, Great Books of the Western World;
Editor-in-Chief, The Great Ideas—A Syntopicon

by the Editors of Wisdom

MORTIMER J. ADLER is recognized the world over as one of the great original thinkers of our time. One of the main exponents of the revival of learning, he is an eminent philosopher, scholar, psychologist, educator, speaker, and prolific author. One of the founders and leaders of the Great Books concept of learning through group discussion, his most original contribution has been to re-educate the U. S. and to re-direct the thinking of educators back to previous centuries – those writings that have survived the test of time – the Great Books. Few men have probed as deeply into the great ideas of mankind as Adler.

Born in New York City in 1902, a graduate of its public schools and of Columbia University, where he also received his Ph.D., Adler taught at Columbia from 1923 to 1929. Shortly after receiving his doctor's degree at Columbia in 1928, he joined Robert M. Hutchins at the University of Chicago, as Professor of the Philosophy of Law, where they pioneered in the introduction of courses based on reading and discussing the Great Books. The expansion of the Great Books classes to adults, and to citizens all over America, through the Great Books Foundation, has made this movement the largest in the field of adult liberal education. Adler has conducted Great Books classes since 1923 and is a director of the Great Books Foundation.

He was Associate Editor of the *Great Books of the Western World* and Editor-in-Chief of *The Great Ideas,* a *Syntopicon*—the first basic reference work in the field of ideas. He supervised one hundred scholars for eight years in the creation of the *Syntopicon,* which cost one million dollars to complete. He wrote 102 essays for the *Syntopicon,* one on each of the Great Ideas.

Author of the popular best-seller, *How to Read a Book,* Adler has written books about a wide variety of subjects, among which are *Art and Prudence, What Man Has Made of Man, A Dialect of Morals, How to Think About War and Peace, The Capitalist Manifesto* (with Louis Kelso), *The Revolution in Education* (with Milton Mayer), and *The Idea of Freedom,* his most recent monumental achievement. He also writes a weekly newspaper column which is nationally syndicated in 23 Sunday newspapers throughout the country.

In 1952, Adler left the University of Chicago to establish the Institute for Philosophical Research, in San Francisco, of which he is now President and Director, to undertake a novel task in the field of humanities and the liberal arts. That task was described as "an effort to take stock of Western thought on subjects which have been of continuing philosophical interest from antiquity to the present day."

The work in which the Institute for Philosophical Research is engaged is unique in the field of humanistic scholarship and in the development of the liberal arts. Nothing like it has ever been done before. Nothing like it is now being done in our universities. The method and aims of the Institute, which is a non-profit corporation, require the sustained cooperation of scholars in the teammwork of collaborative research. In addition to its resident staff, the Institute has the services of a number of distinguished consultants.

Selecting the idea of freedom as the first subject to work on, the Institute undertook to clarify the meaning, the issues, and the arguments which exist in the tremendous literature devoted to the discussions of this basic subject. The first volume of *The Idea of Freedom* was published in September, 1958, and won the enthusiastic approval of scholars for the originality of the method the Institute has devised for the study of ideas, as well as for the clarification it has achieved by the application of this method to the study of human thought about freedom. A second volume, which will complete the study of this idea, is now being prepared for publication.

With the completion of its work on freedom, the Institute proposes to undertake similar studies of other basic subjects. The ideas being considered for future work include Progress, Love, Happiness, Justice, and Law. That such work should be done is of critical importance at this time when fundamental research in the humanities is needed to balance the tremendous investment our society is making in science and its technological applications. It is needed also for the contribution it can make to the preparation of materials and the training of teachers for liberal education.

FROM THE WISDOM OF ADLER

The basic intellectual virtues are understanding, knowledge, and wisdom.

A lover of wisdom aspires to the order which belongs to wisdom. A lover of wisdom emulates the judgment of the wise man. He hopes for a more perfect understanding of the truth than can ever be reached dialectically. So long as he is a lover of wisdom, he will not despair if, always working rightly toward his goal, he falls short of its possession—the possession which would transform his life. The philosopher, the lover of wisdom, remains true to his ideal, and faithful to his love, so long as he strives without wavering to possess the perfect good of the human mind.

Defining truth is easy; knowing whether a particular statement is true is much harder, and pursuing the truth is most difficult of all.

Reasonable men can agree wherever knowledge is possible, but there are many matters about which even reasonable men can only entertain opinions.

Philosophy is not an art, but it makes use of the liberal arts, especially the art of dialectic. It is not theology, for where theology takes its departure from articles of religious faith, philosophy starts with common sense and attempts to refine and deepen the understanding of the world which is latent in common sense.

Science, as well as philosophy and literature, cultivates the human mind.

It is obvious that anyone who can think can learn. Anyone who stops thinking stops learning.

What every schoolboy doesn't know is that he doesn't know very much. This is precisely what every intelligent adult does know: That he did not get an education in school.

Socrates got the reputation of being a wise man by going around trying to persuade people how little they knew. There is, of course, some truth in the ancient insight that awareness of ignorance is the beginning of wisdom. But it is just the beginning. We have to do something about it.

Education is necessary for all adults—just as much for those who have gone through colleges and universities as for those who have not gone beyond elementary school. The person who has had more schooling has some advantage in the long process of learning, but all adults, as they begin their adult life, are on much the same footing so far as the goals of education are concerned.

Those of us who are engaged in adult education have been thinking for some time of how to avoid using that term, because in the minds of the general public it has such an unfortunate connotation. If I could get everybody to use words the way I woulld like them to, I would try to set up the following usage: Use *schooling* to signify the development and training of the young, and *education* to signify the learning done by mature men and women. Then we could say that after schooling, education, not adult education, begins.

No one can be given a completed liberal education in school, college, or university, for unlike the body, the mind's capacity for growth does not terminate with youth; on the contrary, the mature mind is more educable than the immature; therefore, adult education must take up where the schools leave off and continue the process through all the years of adult life.

When we realize that liberal learning must be carried on throughout each individual life, as one of the main pursuits of leisure, we can begin to estimate the full magnitude of the educational problem that our society must cope with for the first time in the history of mankind.

The human mind is not a muscle. It is not an organic thing, in the sense of an ordinary bodily organ. But it is a living thing. And like any other living thing, there are certain indispensable conditions of its vitality. If the body is to be kept healthy, alive, and in repair, it must have food and exercise regularly. What is true of the body is true of the mind. The mind unfed weakens just as the body does. The mind not sustained by the continual intake of something that is capable of filling it well or nourishing it, shrinks and shrivels. And the mind unexercised, like a muscle unused, atrophies, grows weak, becomes almost paralyzed. Hence, just as we know that we cannot support the life of the body this week on the basis of last week's feeding, so we ought to realize that we cannot support the life of the mind this week on last week's reading, much less last year's reading, or the reading done in college.

The process of keeping the mind alive and growing is as perpetual and continual a process as that of keeping the human body alive. But whereas there are limits to the body's growth, the mind, unlike the body, can grow every year of our lives. Until there is a real physical breakdown, real decrepitude, the human mind can grow. The only condition of its growth is that it be fed and exercised.

It is much easier to train the mind than form the character.

In every generation a small number of persons managed to get liberally educated, even as today a few can, in spite of bad schools and teachers, or the lack of them. Learning has always been hard; thinking always painful; and the flesh always weak, weak in the teacher as well as the student.

The best conceivable graduate of the best conceivable school needs adult education as badly as the worst. As far as genuine education is concerned, there are no finishing schools.

The English teacher is the last—and often a very frail—vestige of the liberal tradition in our education.

Our educators are themselves the products of our schools and colleges and their liberalism signifies the extent to which our institutions have failed to accomplish liberal education.

No student should be dropped from college because he fails to measure up to an arbitrary standard determined by a percentage of mastery of a subject-matter or skill; he should be kept in college as long as he manifests any development of his own capacities, and lack of such evidence should be interpreted as a failure on the part of the college, not the student.

When I say adults are more educable than children, I am really saying that adults can think better than children. If this were not so, adults ought to stay away from the polls and send their children there instead. But if an adult can think better than a child, then he must be more educable than a child. Basic learning—the acquisition of ideas, insight, understanding—depends on being able to think. If adults can think better than children, they can also learn better in the fundamental sense of cultivating their minds.

An educated person is one who, through the travail of his own life, has assimilated the ideas which make him representative of his culture, which make him a bearer of its traditions, and which enable him to contribute to the improvement of that culture. Clearly no college boy or girl can be educated in this sense, any more than he can be a man or woman before the hour of maturity has struck.

The great books of ancient and medieval, as well as modern, times are a repository of knowledge and wisdom, a tradition of culture which must initiate each new generation.

The marks of a liberally educated person are not wealth or recognition, success in business or marriage, emotional stability, social poise or adaptation to environment, good manners or even a good moral character. Each of the things is worth having, not in itself or for itself, but for its contribution to the fullness of a happy life. But none is the direct result of liberal education, though we may hope that liberal education does not oppose the acquisition and possession of some, if not all, of them. The direct product of liberal education is a good mind, well-disciplined in its processes of inquiring and judging, knowing and understanding, and well-furnished with knowledge, well-cultivated by ideas.

FROM THE WISDOM OF ADLER

No one has to go to school in order to earn a living. Our grandfathers did not. Perhaps we need schools to train men for the learned professions, but not for the ordinary jobs of an industrial society. The basic tasks of an industrial society can be learned on the job. We need to go to school, not in order to learn how to earn a living, but in order to learn how to use the life for which we are going to earn a living—to learn how to occupy ourselves humanly, to live our leisure hours well and not play them all away. We need to learn how to do well what we are called upon to do as moral and political agents, and to do well what we must do for the cultivation of our own minds. These are the aims of liberal education.

The term philosophy literally means the love of wisdom. In this sense, philosophy is an aspiration or quest, rather than a storehouse of attained and transmittable knowledge. Socrates points out that the philosopher claims only to love wisdom, not to have it.

Philosophy is still in its infancy. Its full growth lies many millenia ahead.

It should be obvious why men everywhere and at all times have placed a high value on freedom. The free man—in any sense of the term—is master of himself and not subject to the will of others.

Man's desire for immortality expresses his dread of disappearance into utter nothingness. He feels a need to be joined with the enduring, the eternal, and a revulsion against total annihilation.

The philosophical conception of happiness is radically different from the ordinary sense of the term. We hear people say, in a moment of satisfaction or joy, that they "feel happy." Or they say that they are happy when they are having a good time. But, according to Aristotle and others, happiness is not something you can "feel" or experience at a particular moment. It is the quality of a whole life. The happy life is the good life.

The American ideal is not the good life, but having a good time full of assorted pleasures day after day.

Is it good for a society to have much free time? The answer is that it depends entirely on how men who have ample free time use it. If they use it, as so many Americans do today, in aimless play, passive forms of amusement, and desperate measures to kill time that hangs heavy on their hands, then it obviously is not good for them or for society. It can only lead to degeneracy and corruption. But if people use their free time to develop their faculties, to grow mentally, and to participate in society and culture, then the more free time they have, the better.

Adult education does not consist of a course of study or a subject matter to be mastered in a fixed number of years, something to take an examination on and pass, and then be finished with forever. That is not the point. Adult education, once begun, is interminable. Nothing but serious illness relieves any adult of his responsibility to continue learning year after year, every part of every year, until the end of his life.

Without a liberally schooled and a liberally educated people, democracy and capitalism must degenerate into a mockery of themselves.

For the most part, the members of the teaching profession are over-trained and under-educated. Teaching is an art and a teacher must be trained, but since the technique is one of communicating knowledge and inculcating discipline, it is not educational psychology and courses in method and pedagogy which train a teacher, but the liberal arts. Further, a teacher should have a cultivated mind, generally cultivated regardless of his field of special interest, for he must be the visible and moving representative of the cultural tradition to his students. But how can he be this if he has no acquaintance with the cultural heritage, if he cannot read well, and if he is not well read?

The myth persists that adults cannot learn, or at least that they do not do much learning as the years overtake them. It is not a myth concocted by children to humiliate their elders. It is a story we adults tell about ourselves, perhaps to avoid a frank confession of guilt. For all of us, if we are at all honest about ourselves, know that we don't do much thinking, and hence very little real learning, in the course of the hurried years. And most of us gradually get to the point where we resign ourselves to letting others do the thinking for us. The mind does not grow weaker just by aging, but by disuse.

The more science we have, the more we are in need of wisdom to prevent its misuse. The imminent tragedy of the contemporary world is written in the fact that positivistic modern culture has magnified science and almost completely emancipated itself from wisdom.

Love essentially is good will; thinking well of others and wishing them well. It is a state of the will, not of the animal passions. Even in its earthiest form it is a giving as well as a taking. People who can not give themselves never can know love.

What is honored in a country, Plato said, is cultivated there. When we honor the difficult tasks of learning and leisure, we shall enjoy their fruits.

Education which does not build on wisdom or respect reason above all else, leads to the frustration of the individual and the brutal conflict of social forces. For whenever reason does not rule, the mind must yield to the sheer weight of opinion propagated by pressure; only might remains and none dares say it is not right.

Our sense of what is fitting and just doesn't jibe with the inexorable laws of the universe, the blind decrees of Fate, or the inscrutable will of God. We become rebellious and puff ourselves up to ask questions and act defiantly out of all proportion to our wisdom or our power. And usually our pride produces a tragedy that is partly of our own making.

The difference between a man and a child is a difference wrought by experience, pain, and suffering, by hard knocks. It cannot be produced by schooling.

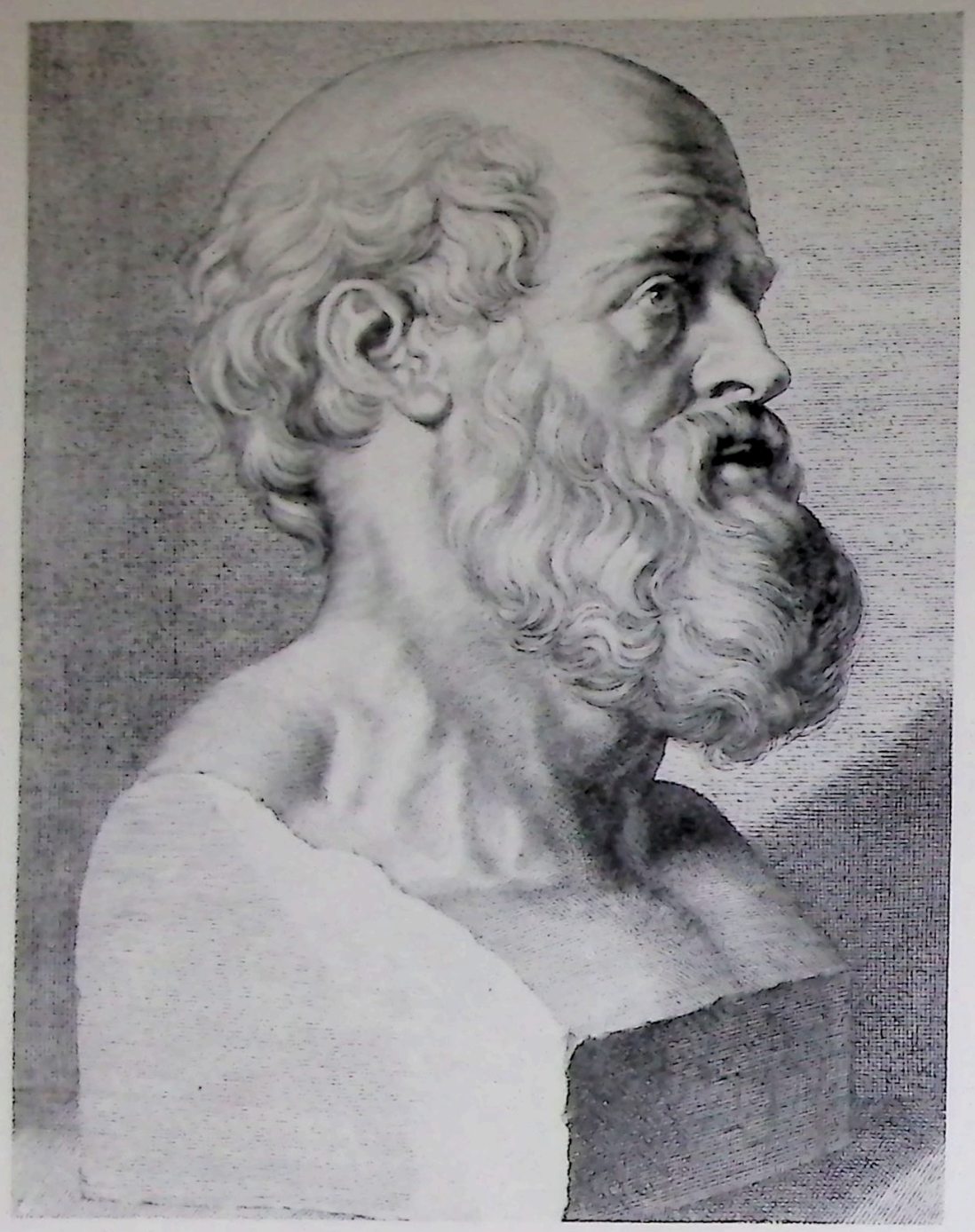
In any group of people you can always spot the man who has been actively thinking about the subject under discussion. He dances all around the others. He has a dozen ideas to their one, and their one isn't very good because it is probably the same old idea, lame and halt from years of disuse.

Most of us also hold a false view of adult education. We think of it as something for the underprivileged. Some unfortunate people, deprived of schooling in youth by economic circumstances or hardships, in later life, while they are working all day to support a family, go to night school to make up for their lack of schooling in youth. Night schooling or remedial schooling—to compensate for lack of sufficient schooling in youth—is, for a great many people, the essence of adult education. When the majority who are more fortunate think of it in this way, they conclude that adult education is not for them, but only for the unfortunate few who lacked sufficient schooling in youth. These are all wrong notions of the meaning of what schooling is or should be, and of what fundamental education for adults should be.

What is the ultimate goal toward which every part of schooling or education is directed? It is wisdom. We would all like to be a little wiser than we are—to have a little more understanding, a little more insight, a little more comprehension of the human situation, of the conditions of our lives, of the world in which we live; to know better the difference between good and evil. But how long does it take to become wise? The answer is: A lifetime. Hence if wisdom is the ultimate goal of the whole process of learning, then that process must go on for a lifetime.

GREAT AUTHORS
OF THE
GREAT BOOKS
OF THE WESTERN WORLD

HOMER	VIRGIL	CERVANTES	HAMILTON
AESCHYLUS	PLUTARCH	BACON	MADISON
SOPHOCLES	TACITUS	DESCARTES	JAY
EURIPIDES	PTOLEMY	SPINOZA	MILL
ARISTOPHANES	COPERNICUS	MILTON	BOSWELL
HERODOTUS	KEPLER	PASCAL	JOHNSON
THUCYDIDES	PLOTINUS	NEWTON	LAVOISIER
PLATO	AUGUSTINE	HUYGENS	FOURIER
SOCRATES	AQUINAS	LOCKE	FARADAY
ARISTOTLE	DANTE	BERKELEY	HEGEL
HIPPOCRATES	CHAUCER	HUME	GOETHE
GALEN	MACHIAVELLI	SWIFT	MELVILLE
EUCLID	HOBBES	STERNE	DARWIN
ARCHIMEDES	RABELAIS	FIELDING	MARX
APPOLLONIUS	MONTAIGNE	MONTESQUIEU	ENGELS
NICOMACHUS	SHAKESPEARE	ROUSSEAU	TOLSTOY
LUCRETIUS	GILBERT	SMITH	DOSTOEVSKY
EPICTETUS	GALILEO	GIBBON	JAMES
AURELIUS	HARVEY	KANT	FREUD



HIPPOCRATES

OUR knowledge of the historical Hippocrates is almost completely dependent upon Plato. From the *Protagoras* and the *Phaedrus* we learn that Hippocrates was a contemporary of Socrates, that he was a native of Cos, and an Asclepiad, a member, that is, of a family or guild that traced its origin to the God of Healing. He was well known both as a practitioner and a teacher of medicine, and he held that knowledge of the body depends upon the knowledge of the whole man. There is also the implication in Plato's words that Hippocrates travelled from city to city and that, like the great sophists and rhetoricians, he came to Athens to practise and to teach his art.

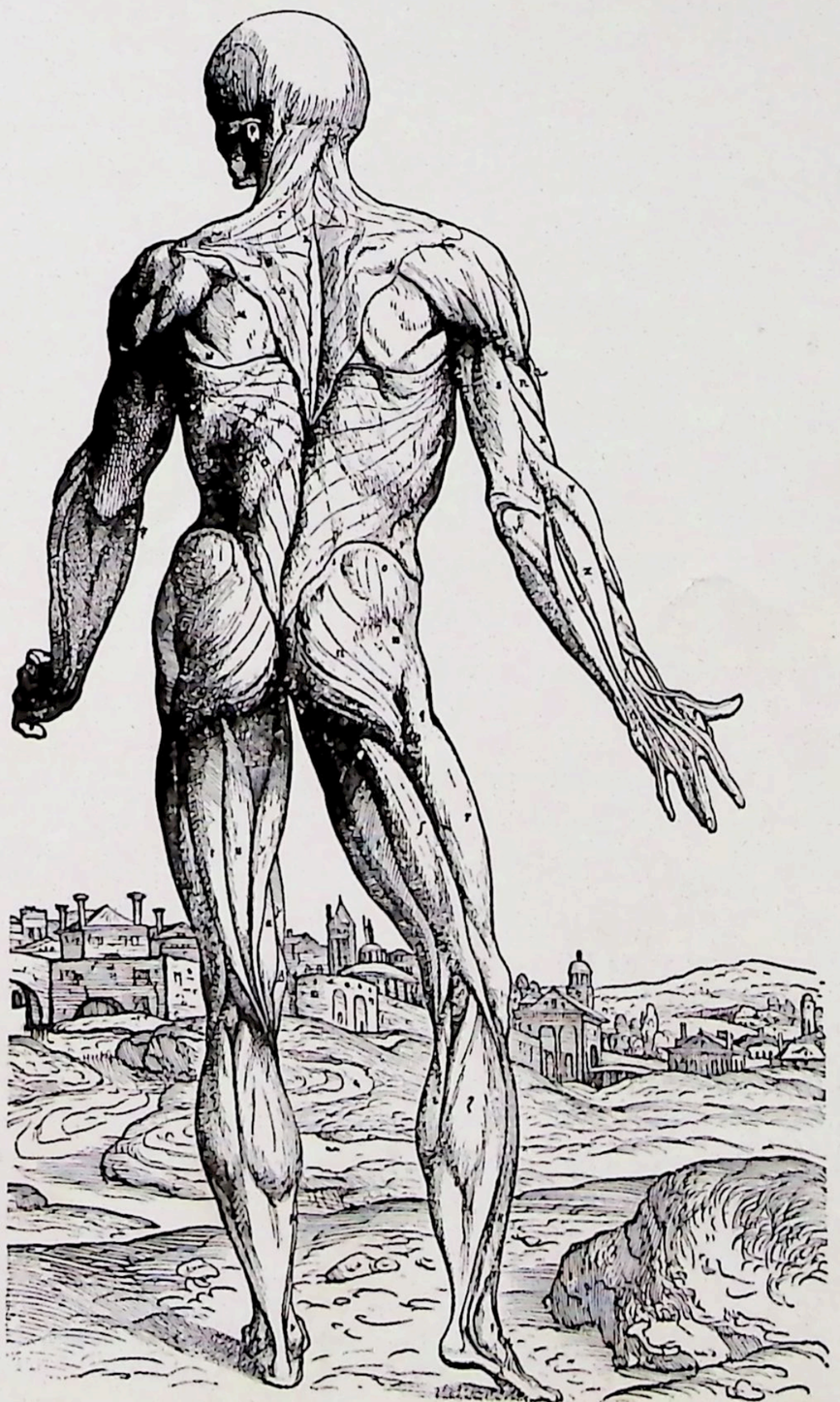
The figure of the legendary Father of Medicine soon replaced the historical Hippocrates. Although there is no evidence from his own time that he left any writings, within a century medical works were being attributed to him, especially those emanating from the famous medical school of Cos. The writings which now go by the name of the Hippocratic Collection consist for the most part of the early Greek medical treatises which were brought together by the Alexandrian scholars of the third century. The Collection is large and heterogeneous and although all were attributed to Hippocrates, the genuineness of some of them was questioned even in antiquity.

The Alexandrian accounts of the life of Hippocrates are rich in detail. He was born in the year 460 B.C., descended from Hercules as well as from Aesculapius. He studied medicine and philosophy from famous teachers and travelled over the whole Greek world, curing a Macedonian tyrant of the malady of love, driving out the plague from Athens by lighting fires in the public squares, refusing to go Persia to treat the King, and dying at a great age—the dates range from 375 to 351 B.C. – at Larissa in Thessaly.

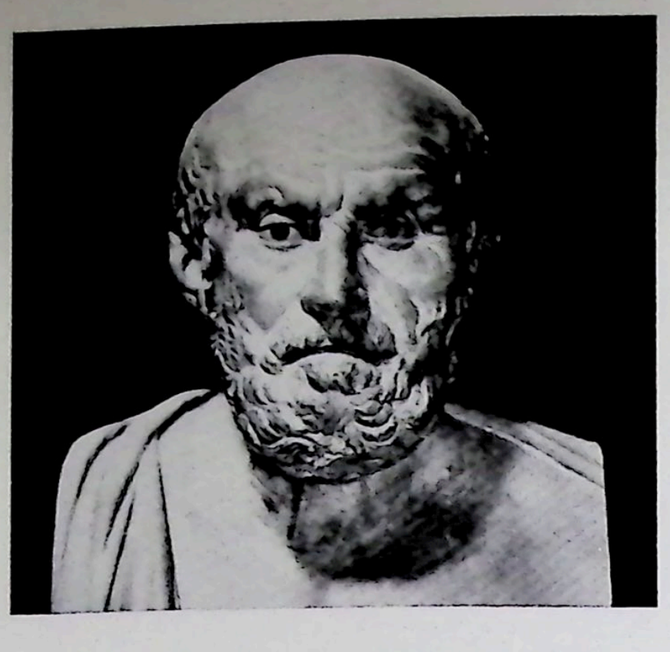
For succeeding generations Hippocrates has been, as he was for Galen, the legislator of medicine, the ideal physician "who with purity and with holiness lived his life and practised his art."

Hippocrates, refusing to compromise his principles, rejects gifts sent him by Artaxerxes, powerful ruler of Persia.

The name Hippocrates, the "Father of Medicine," has come to represent the beauty, value and dignity of medicine for all time. His kindliness and concern are embodied in his aphorism, "Where there is love for mankind, there is love for the art of healing." These qualities are reflected in the face of this revered practitioner, scientist, and teacher, as he palpates a young patient and soothes a worried mother in the fifth century B.C. (Painting by Robert Thom)



FROM THE WISDOM OF HIPPOCRATES



The art of medicine consists in three things: The disease, the patient and the physician. The patient must combat the disease along with the physician.

Fat men are more likely to die suddenly than the slender.

Healing is a matter of time, but it is sometimes also a matter of opportunity.

Sometimes give your services for nothing, calling to mind a previous benefaction or present satisfaction. And if there be an opportunity of serving one who is a stranger in financial straits, give full assistance to all such. For where there is love of man, there is also love of the art. For some patients, though conscious that their condition is perilous, recover their health simply through their contentment with the goodness of the physician. And it is well to superintend the sick to make them well, to care for the healthy to keep them well, also to care for one's own self, so as to observe what is seemly.

Extreme remedies are very appropriate for extreme diseases.

Let exercise come before meals, not after.

To do nothing is sometimes a good remedy.

Natural forces within us are the true healers of disease.

Never work when hungry.

Old people have fewer diseases than the young, but their diseases never leave them.

The human soul develops up to death.

What drugs cannot heal, the knife can heal; what the knife cannot heal the cautery can heal; what the cautery cannot heal is incurable.

Life is short, the art long, opportunity fleeting, experience treacherous, judgment difficult.

Everything in excess is opposed to nature.

Wherever the art of medicine is loved, there also is love of humanity.

Follow that system of regimen which, according to your ability and judgment, you consider for the benefit of your patients, and abstain from whatever is deleterious and mischievous.

With purity and with holiness pass your life and practice your art.

Whatever, in connection with your professional practice, or not in connection with it, you see or hear in the life of men which ought not to be spoken of abroad, do not divulge, as all such should be kept secret.

THE OATH OF HIPPOCRATES

I SWEAR by Apollo the physician, and Aesculapius, and Health, and All-heal, and all the gods and goddesses, that, according to my ability and judgment, I will keep this Oath and this stipulation– to reckon him who taught me this Art equally dear to me as my parents, to share my substance with him, and relieve his necessities if required; to look upon his offspring in the same footing as my own brothers, and to teach them this art, if they shall wish to learn it, without fee or stipulation; and that by precept, lecture, and every other mode of instruction, I will impart a knowledge of the Art to my own sons, and those of my teachers, and to disciples bound by a stipulation and oath according to the law of medicine, but to none others. I will follow that system of regimen which, according to my ability and judgment, I consider for the benefit of my patients, and abstain from whatever is deleterious and mischievous. I will give no deadly medicine to any one if asked, nor suggest any such counsel; and in like manner I will not give to a woman a pessary to produce abortion. With purity and with holiness I will pass my life and practice my Art. I will not cut persons laboring under the stone, but will leave this to be done by men who are practitioners of this work. Into whatever houses I enter, I will go into them for the benefit of the sick, and will abstain from every voluntary act of mischief and corruption; and, further from the seduction of females or males, of freemen and slaves. Whatever, in connection with my professional practice or not, in connection with it, I see or hear, in the life of men, which ought not to be spoken of abroad, I will not divulge, as reckoning that all such should be kept secret. While I continue to keep this Oath unviolated, may it be granted to me to enjoy life and the practice of the art, respected by all men, in all times! But should I trespass and violate this Oath, may the reverse be my lot!

GALEN

GALEN the physician was born at Pergamum, the capital of Mysia in Asia Minor, which had once been a center of art and learning and which still possessed at the time of Galen's birth the second greatest library in the ancient world and a temple of Aesculapius. His father was an architect or engineer, "amiable, just, worthy, and benevolent"; his mother "had a very bad temper, at times used to bite her serving-maids, and was forever shouting at my father and quarrelling with him—worse than Xanthippe with Socrates." "When I compared the excellence of my father's disposition with the disgraceful passions of my mother," Galen wrote, "I resolved to love and imitate the former qualities and to hate and avoid the latter."

The father provided a liberal education for his son, and by the age of seventeen or eighteen Galen was familiar with the Platonic, Aristotelian, Stoic, and Epicurean philosophies. About this time, in obedience to a dream of his father, he began the study of medicine in his native city. When he fell ill from overwork, he kept a careful record of his symptoms. After his father's death, he left Pergamum for Smyrna in order to study with Pelops the physician and Albinus the peripatetic. In search of more knowledge he roamed through Greece, Cilicia, Phoenicia, Palestine, Crete, and Cyprus.

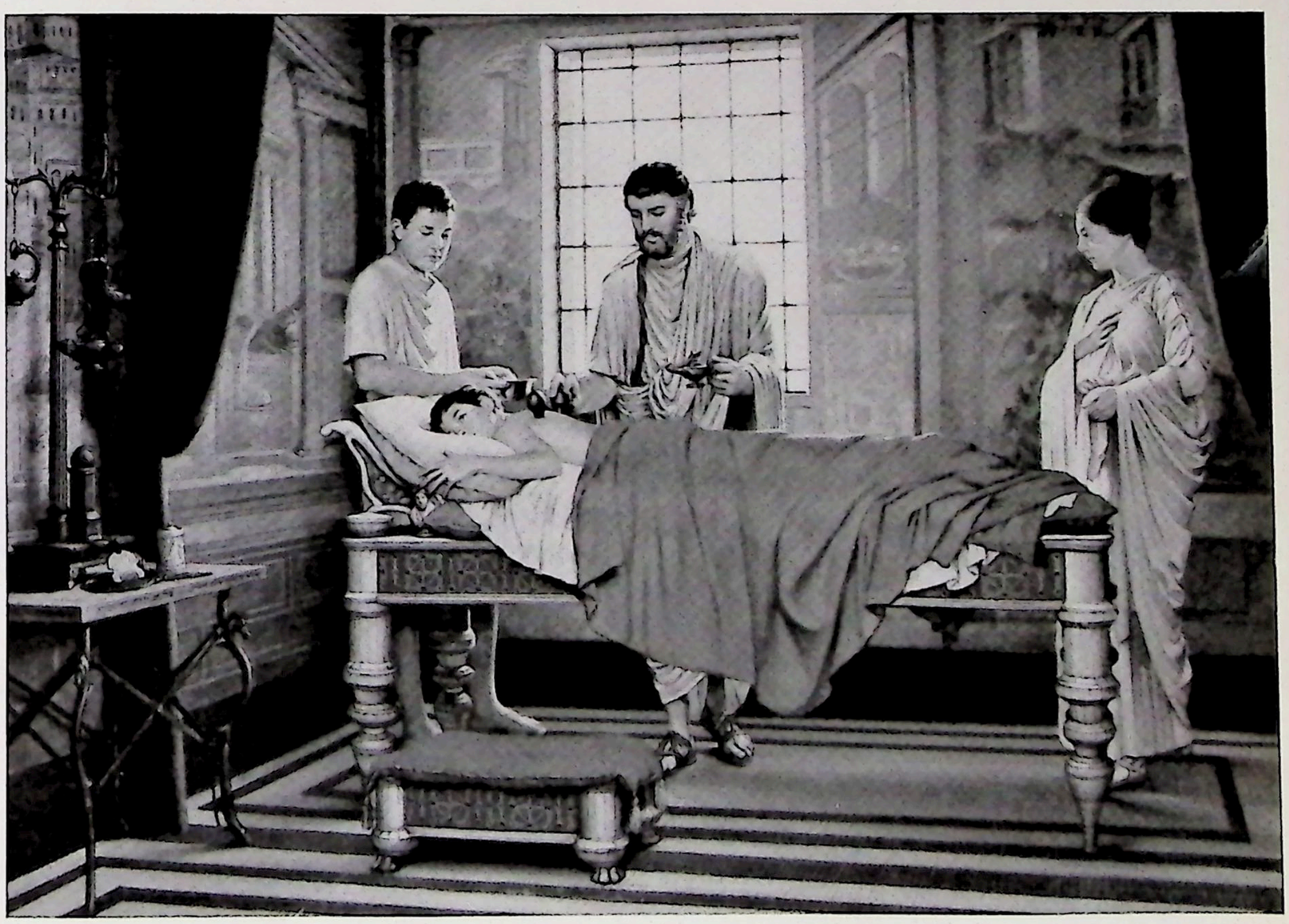
On his return to Pergamum in 157-158, Galen was appointed physician and surgeon to the gladiators; he supervised their diet and treated their wounds. He also had a private practice, continued the study of philosophy, and wrote the first of his many treatises.

In the first years of the reign of Marcus Aurelius, Galen went to Rome, where he soon acquired fame as a physician and as a philosopher.

Despite his name, meaning "gentle" or "peaceful," and his disapproval of his mother's temper, Galen was an incessant critic of the contemporary medical sects then fluorishing in Rome. He opposed all fads and cults, the tyranny of theory and the contempt of theory, and every doctor who lost sight of what he held to be the Hippocratic teaching on the unity of the living organism and the force of "what nature does." The enmities he incurred by polemical activity may have caused his sudden departure from Rome in 168 and retirement to Pergamum. He was soon recalled by imperial command. Marcus Aurelius, who was one of his patients, desired his attendance for the campaigns against the Germans. But Galen did not wish to go and in the end was allowed to remain at Rome as physician to Commodus, the young heir to the throne.

Little is known of Galen after this appointment. He certainly devoted much of his time to writing. He left five hundred treatises written in clear Attic Greek. One of them argued "That the best Physician is also a Philosopher," and many of his own works dealt with philosophical problems. In his *De Libris propriis* he mentions one hundred and twenty-four philosophical treatises, which include commentaries on the *Categories* and *Analytics* of *Aristotle,* and on the *Timaeus* and *Philebus* of Plato. He also wrote five treatises on Ancient Comedy. Only fragments remain of his non-medical writings.

Galen was apparently in Rome during the fire of 191, when his library burned, and he was still lecturing and practising during the reign of Pertinax. He may have spent his last years as physician to the emperor. He died at the turn of the century.



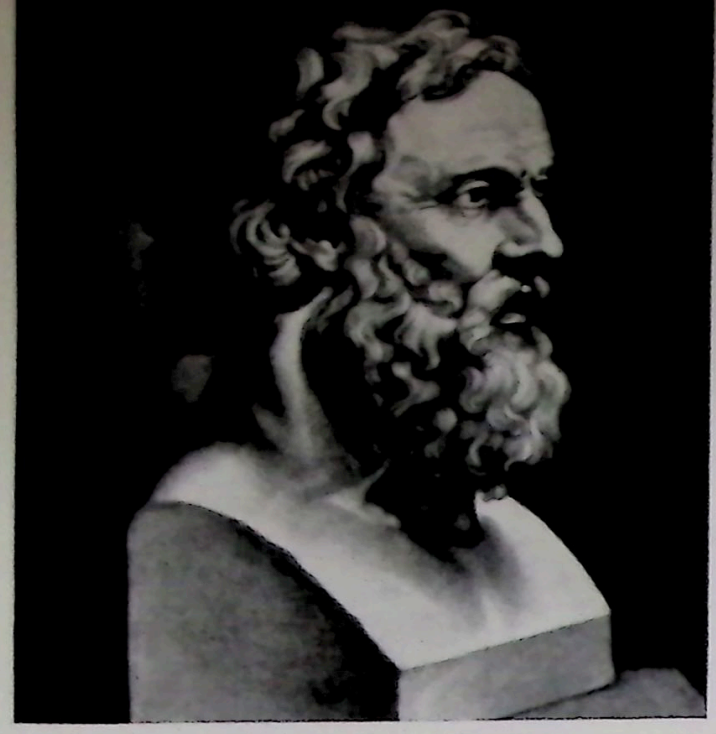
Galen was physician to emperors as well as commoners. His teachings were accepted as dogma by medical men for 1500 years. (Painting by Robert Thom)

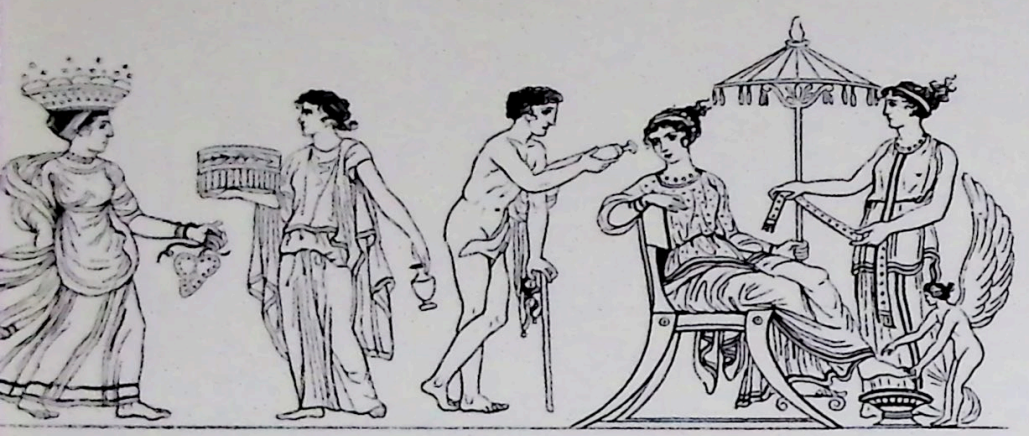
FROM THE WISDOM OF GALEN

Hippocrates was the first to be both physician and philosopher—the first to recognize what nature does.

The physician is only nature's assistant.

The chief virtue that language can have is clearness, and nothing detracts from it so much as the use of unfamiliar words.





PLATO

PLATO, son of Ariston and Perictione, was born in 428 or 427 B.C. His family was, on both sides, one of the most distinguished of Athens. Ariston is said to have traced his descent through Codrus to the god Poseidon; on the mother's side, the family, which was related to Solon, goes back to Dropides, archon of the year 644 B.C. His mother apparently married as her second husband her uncle Pyrilampes, a prominent supporter of Pericles, and Plato was probably chiefly brought up in his house.

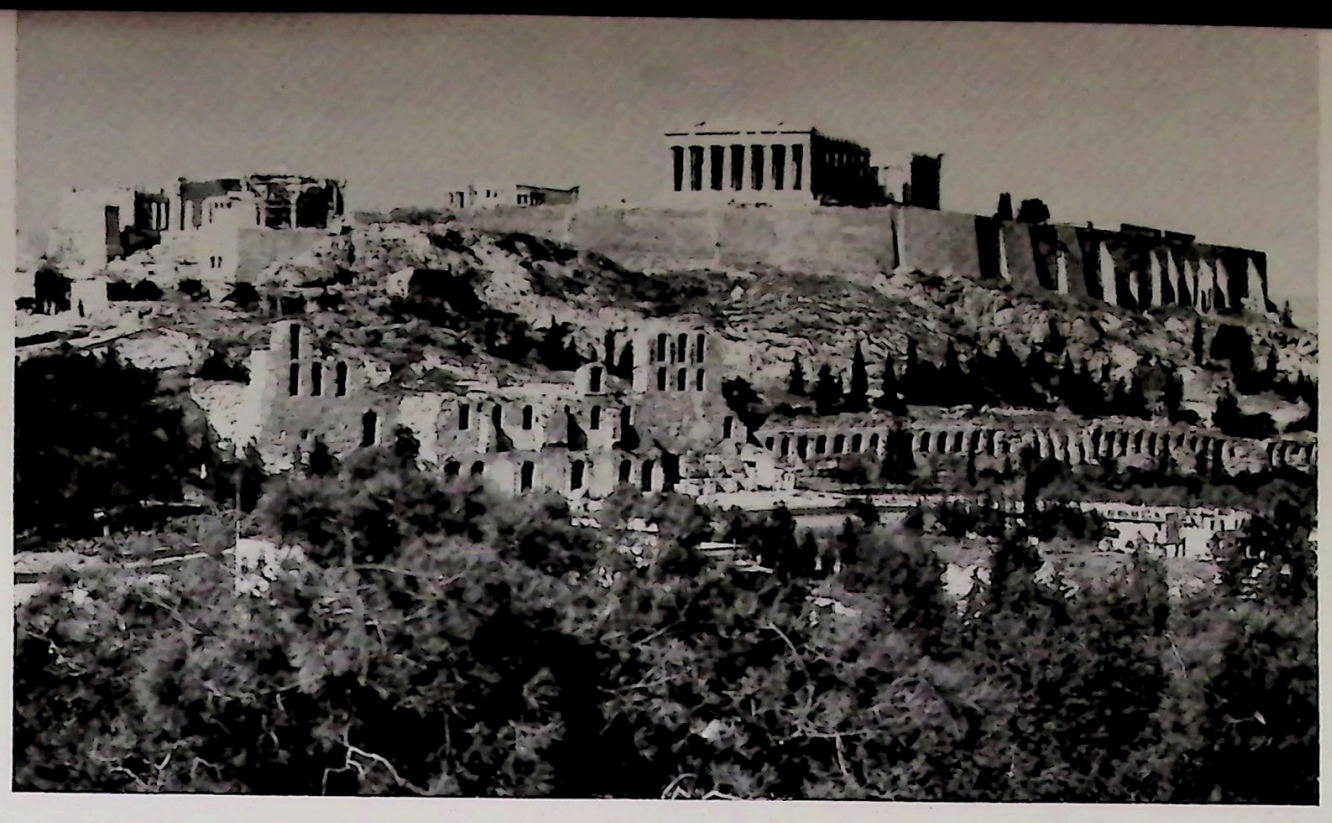
Plato's early life coincided with the disastrous years of the Peloponnesian War, the shattering of the Athenian Empire, and the fierce civil strife of oligarchs and democrats in the year of anarchy 404–403 B.C. He was too young to have learned anything by experience of the imperial democracy of Pericles, or of the full tide of the "sophistic" movement. He must have known Socrates from boyhood, for his relatives, Critias and Charmides, were old friends of the philosopher. Aristotle also ascribes to him an early familiarity with the Heracleitean, Cratylus. But Plato himself tells us in *The Seventh Letter* that his early ambitions were political. Following the establishment of the Tyranny of the Thirty in 404, in which his relatives were leaders, Plato was "invited to share in their doings as something to which I had a claim." He held back until their policy was revealed and then was repelled by their violence, particularly by their attempt to implicate Socrates in an illegal execution. He hoped for better things from the restored democracy until the condemnation of Socrates convinced him that he could no more collaborate with the democrats than with the oligarchs. Concluding that "public affairs at Athens were not carried on in accordance with the manners and practices of our fathers, nor was there any ready method by which I could make new friends," Plato abandoned his intention of devoting himself to politics.

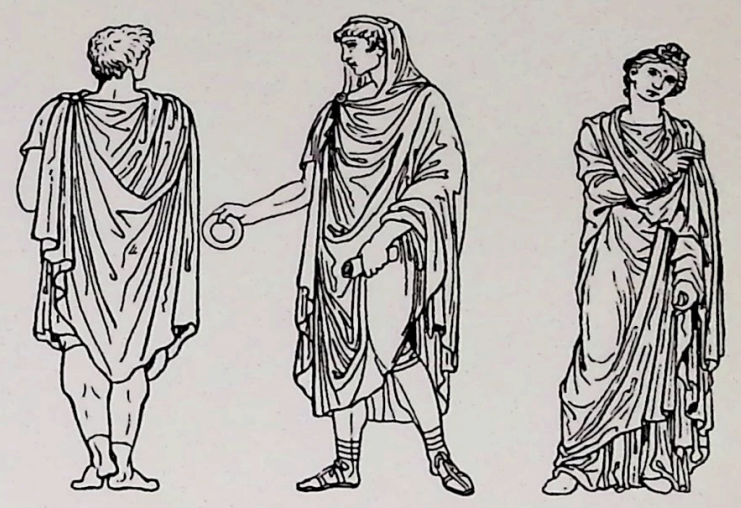
After the execution of Socrates in 399 B.C., Plato went on a series of travels. It would seem that he then discovered his vocation to philosophy as he reflected on the life and teaching of Socrates. Hermodorus, an immediate disciple, is the authority for the statement that Plato and other Socratic men took temporary refuge at Megara with the Philosopher Eucleides.

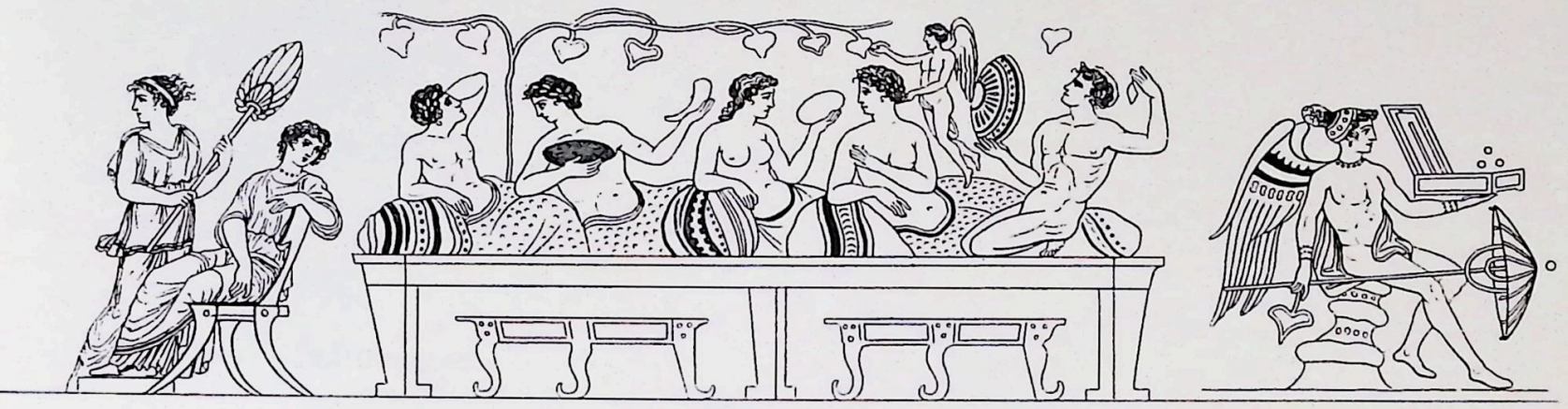
On his return to Athens about 387, Plato founded the Academy. He had presumably already completed some of his dialogues, in particular those celebrating the memory of Socrates. For the rest of his life he presided over the Academy, making it the intellectual center of Greek life; its only rival was the school of Isocrates. From the allusions of Aristotle it appears that Plato lectured without manuscript, and "problems" were propounded for solution by the joint researches of the students. In addition to philosophy, particular attention was given to science and law. The most important mathematical work of the fourth century was done by friends or pupils of Plato. Theatetus, the founder of solid geometry, was a member of the Academy, and Eudoxus of Cnidus is said to have removed his school from Cyzicus to Athens for the purpose of cooperation with Plato.

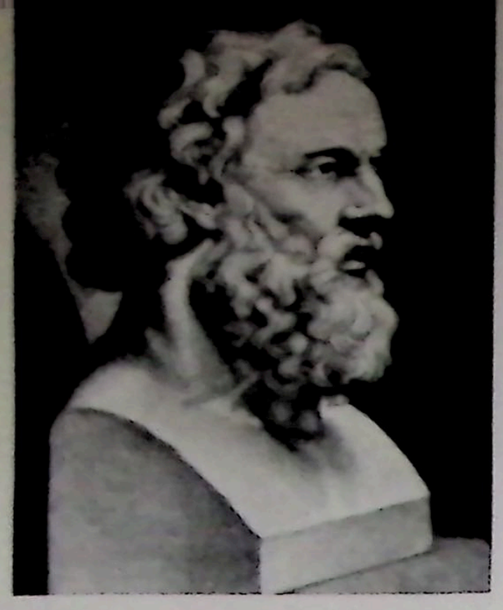
In 367, when Plato was in his sixtieth year and renowned as the head of the Academy, he was invited to intervene in the politics of Syracuse. Dionysius II had just assumed power, and Plato's friend, Dion, urged the philosopher to come and undertake the education of the young king and to strengthen him against the encroachment of Carthage in Sicily. Plato's reluctance to make such an attempt was overcome only by his friendship for Dion and "a feeling of shame . . . lest I might someday appear to myself wholly and solely a mere man of words." Plato started Dionysius on a program of philosophical education, but in a few months found himself involved in the intrigues of the court against Dion, and when Dion was finally forced into virtual banishment, Plato returned to Athens. Dionysius, who prided himself on his philosophical accomplishments, kept in correspondence with Plato and prevailed upon him to visit Syracuse again in 361. Plato renewed his attempt to persuade Dionysius "not to enslave Sicily nor any other State to despots . . . but to put it under the rule of laws." But he again found that the tyrant refused "to act righteously" and allowed no opportunity for a rule in which "philosophy and power really met together." It was only after considerable personal danger that Plato reached Athens. He never again attempted direct intervention in political affairs, although several members of the Academy joined Dion's expedition against Syracuse in 357, which resulted in the overthrow of the tyranny.

The Sicilian voyages are considered to mark a distinct break in Plato's literary activity. The work of his last years is now usually held to consist of a group of seven dialogues: *Theaetetus, Parmenides, Sophist, Statesman, Timaeus, Philebus,* and *Laws.* The Academy was presumably well organized by that time and made fewer administrative demands upon Plato. But we know from Aristotle, who became a student there in 367, that Plato still continued to lecture and to take a leading part in the research "problems." Legislation seems to have been given particular concern, and the *Laws* is said to have been in the process of publication when Plato died in 348 or 347 B.C.









FROM THE WISDOM OF PLATO

Perfect wisdom has four parts: Wisdom, the principle of doing things aright; justice, the principle of doing things equally in public and private; fortitude, the principle of not flying danger, but meeting it; and temperance, the principle of subduing desires and living moderately.

The learning and knowledge that we have is, at the most, but little compared with that of which we are ignorant.

The beginning is the most important part of the work.

He who is of a calm and happy nature will hardly feel the pressure of age, but to him who is of an opposite disposition youth and age are equally a burden.

There is simple ignorance, which is the source of lighter offenses, and double ignorance, which is accompanied by a conceit of wisdom.

The judge should not be young; he should have learned to know evil, not from his own soul, but from late and long observation of the nature of evil in others: Knowledge should be his guide, not personal experience.

The wise man will want to be ever with him who is better than himself.

All knowledge that is divorced from justice must be called cunning rather than wisdom.

Self-conquest is the greatest of all victories.

It is expedient that a wicked man be punished as that a sick man be cured by a physician; for all chastisement is a kind of medicine.

If I were sure God would pardon me, and men would not know my sin, yet I should be ashamed to sin, because of its essential baseness.

Ignorance of all things is an evil neither terrible nor excessive, nor yet the greatest of all: But great cleverness and much learning, if they be accompanied by a bad training, are a much greater misfortune.

All men are by nature equal, made, all, of the same earth by the same Creator, and however we deceive ourselves, as dear to God is the poor peasant as the mighty prince.

It gives me great pleasure to converse with the aged. They have been over the road that all of us must travel, and know where it is rough and difficult and where it is level and easy.

A philosopher is one who desires to discern the truth.

The cause of all the blunders committed by man arises from excessive self-love. He who intends to be a great man ought to love neither himself nor his own things, but only what is just, whether it happens to be done by himself or by another.

When men speak ill of you, live so as nobody may believe them.

Wise men talk because they have something to say: Fools, because they have to say something.

Few men are so obstinate in their atheism that a pressing danger will not compel them to the acknowledgment of a divine power.

Nothing is more unworthy of a wise man, or ought to trouble him more, than to have allowed more time for trifling, and useless things, than they deserved

If a man be endowed with a generous mind, this is the best kind of nobility.

More will be accomplished, and better, and with more ease, if every man does what he is best fitted to do, and nothing else.

Freedom in a democracy is the glory of the State, and therefore in a democracy only will the freeman of nature deign to dwell.

No physician, in so far as he is a physician, considers his own good in what he prescribes, but the good of his patient; for the true physician is also a ruler having the human body as a subject, and is not a mere money-maker.

Nothing in human affairs is worth any great anxiety.

Bodily exercise, when compulsory, does no harm to the body; but knowledge which is acquired under compulsion obtains no hold on the mind.

As there are misanthropists or haters of men, so also are there misologists or haters of ideas.

Knowledge is the food of the soul.

Between knowledge of what really exists and ignorance of what does not exist lies the domain of opinion. It is more obscure than knowledge, but clearer than ignorance.

As empty vessels make the loudest sound, so they that have least wit are the greatest babblers.

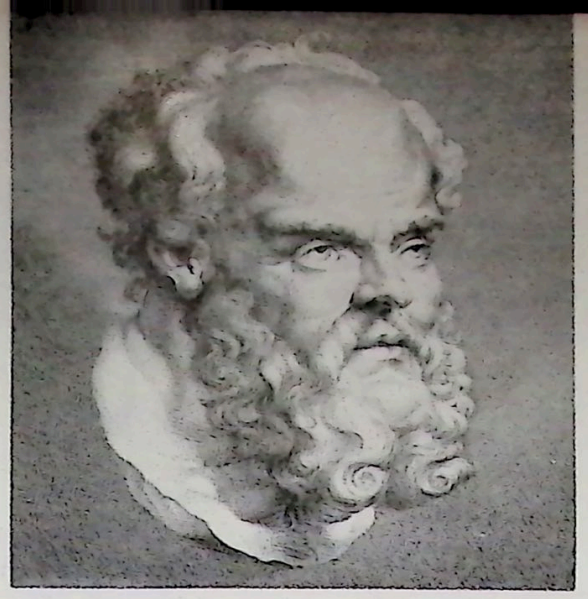
Until philosophers are kings, or kings and princes of this world have the spirit and power of philosophy, and political greatness and wisdom meet in one, and those commoner natures who pursue either to the exclusion of the other are compelled to stand aside, cities will never have rest from their evils.

Better be unborn than untaught, for ignorance is the root of misfortune.

Atheism is a disease of the soul, before it becomes an error of the understanding.

Thinking is the talking of the soul with itself.

The man who makes everything that leads to happiness depend upon himself, and not upon other men, has adopted the very best plan for living happily. This is the man of moderation, the man of manly character and of wisdom.



FROM THE WISDOM OF SOCRATES

They who provide much wealth for their children but neglect to improve them in virtue, do like those who feed their horses high, but never train them to be useful.

As one man is pleased with improving his farm, another his horse, so I am daily pleased in growing better.

Nature has given us two ears, two eyes, and but one tongue, to the end that we should hear and see more than we speak.

If all our misfortunes were laid in one common heap, whence everyone must take an equal portion, most people would be content to take their own and depart.

I am wiser than this man, for neither of us appear to know anything great and good: But he fancies he knows something, although he knows nothing, whereas I, as I do not know anything, so I do not fancy I do.

Better do a little well, than a great deal badly.

The way to gain a good reputation is to endeavor to be what you desire to appear.

If a rich man is proud of his wealth, he should not be praised until it is known how he employs it.

By all means marry. If you get a good wife, you will become very happy; if you get a bad one, you will become a philosopher—and that is good for every man.

Once made equal to man, woman becomes his superior.

The tongue of a fool is the key of his counsel, which, in a wise man, wisdom has in keeping.

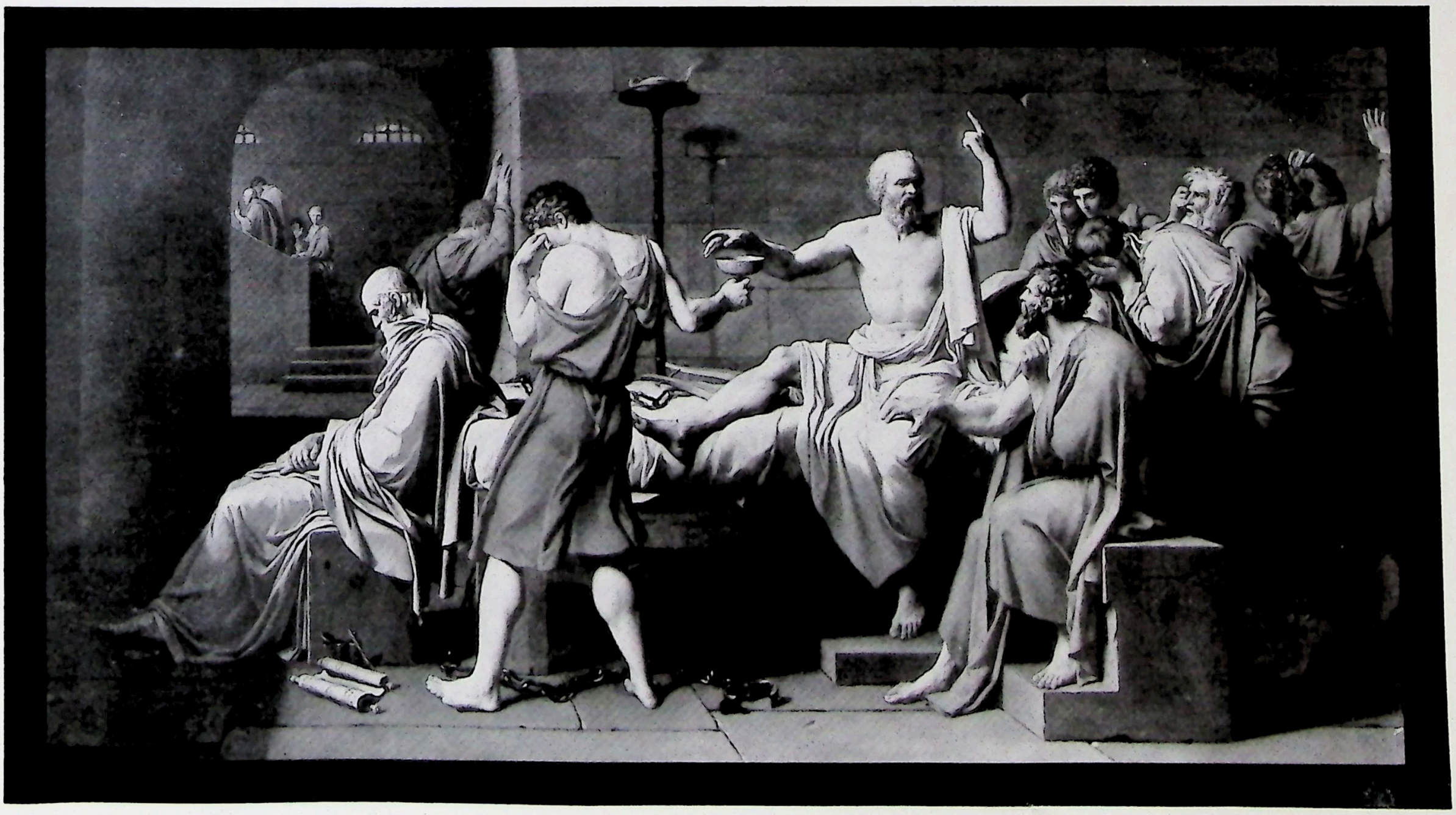
Be of good cheer about death, and know this of a truth, that no evil can happen to a good man, either in life or after death.

Fame is the perfume of heroic deeds.

Let him that would move the world, first move himself.

There is only one good, that is knowledge; there is only one evil, that is ignorance.

The Death of Socrates, painting by Jacques Louis David.



ARISTOTLE

ARISTOTLE was born in 384 at Stagira, a Greek colonial town on the Aegean near the Macedonian border and somewhat east of the modern city of Salonica. Both of his parents were Ionian in origin. His mother was a native of Chalcis, from which Stagira had been colonized. His father, Nicomachus, belonged to the guild of the "sons of Aesculapius" and was court physician to Amyntas II, the father of Philip of Macedon. Aristotle, who seems to have remained with his parents during his first seventeen years, may have studied medicine with his father, and it was sometimes claimed in antiquity that he practised medicine when he first went to Athens.

In 367 Aristotle entered the Academy at Athens. Plato was then sixty-one and just entering upon his intervention in the politics of Syracuse. The Academy was giving particular attention to the problems of politics and legislation and, in addition to its more general philosophic interests, was increasingly preoccupied with mathematics and astronomy. Few details have survived of the life Aristotle led at the Academy for twenty years. He is said to have been called by Plato the intellect of the school. There is also a tradition that he taught rhetoric. He is known to have written numerous dialogues modeled after those of his master, which were famed in antiquity for their lucidity and the easy flow of their style. There is little evidence of any serious disagreement between master and pupil during these years, and on Plato's death in 347 Aristotle wrote an elegy for an altar of friendship to Plato in which he praised him as "the man whom it is not lawful for bad men even to praise, who alone or first of mortals clearly revealed, by his own life and by the methods of his words, how to be happy is to be good."

When Speusippus became head of the Academy in 347, Aristotle and another of Plato's pupils, Xenocrates, left Athens for Assus, in the Troiad, where two former members of the Academy were teaching. The "tyrant," or ruler, of the territory, Hermias, had become their pupil and, out of gratitude, had bestowed upon them the town of Assus. The four set up something like a colonial Academy. Through his teaching Aristotle apparently became the intimate friend of Hermias, and he married the ruler's adopted daughter. Theophrastus from the neighboring island of Lesbos was also among his pupils, and it may have been on his suggestion that Aristotle moved about 344 to Mytilene on Lesbos, where for two years he was engaged largely in the study of natural history, particularly marine biology.

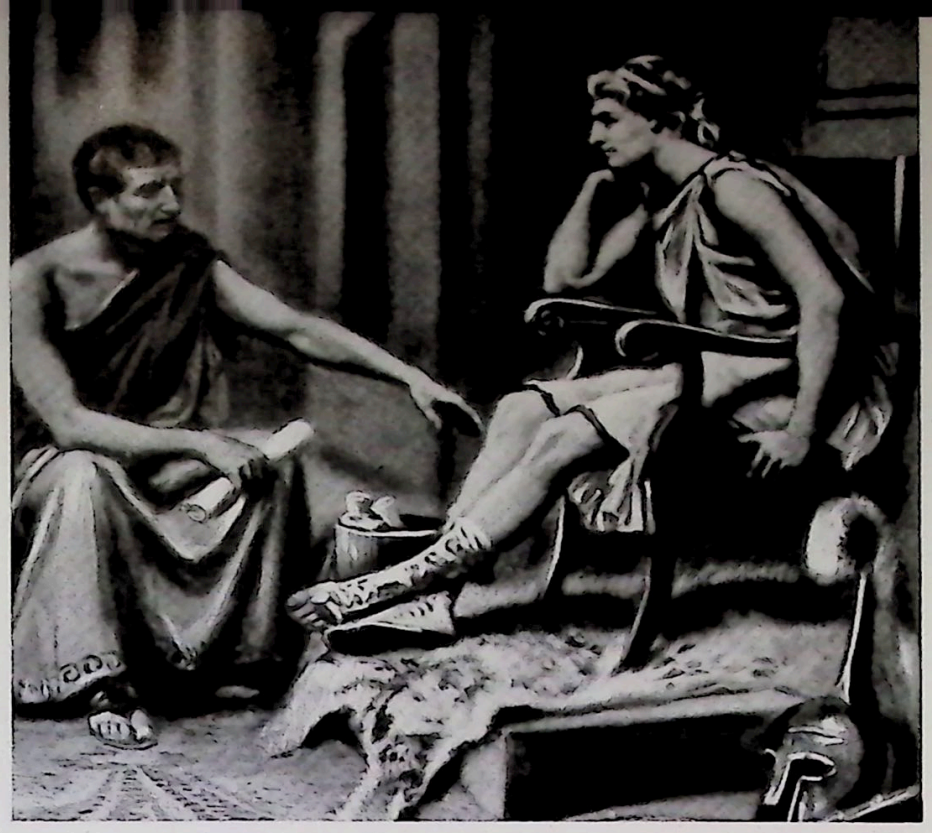
In 342 Aristotle returned to Macedonia to act as tutor to the young Alexander. Although he had been in early youth close to the Macedonian court and already enjoyed some reputation for his dialogues, the deciding factor in the appointment may have been Aristotle's connection with Hermias, who at this time was apparently negotiating with Philip regarding an expedition against Persia. Aristotle stayed in Macedonia for seven years. The tradition is that he taught politics and rhetoric, and he is said to have prepared an edition of Homer for the use of Alexander, who was thirteen at the time of his coming. In 340, after Philip went to war, Alexander directed political affairs at home as regent, and it is likely that Aristotle set up a school and gave the greater part of his time to his own studies. He induced Alexander to restore Stagira, which had been destroyed a few years before, and is said to have provided it with a constitution. Perhaps at Alexander's request, he wrote the two political treatises or pamphlets, no longer extant, *On Kingship* and *On Colonies*. Although Aristotle could have seen but little of his royal pupil during the latter years of his Macedonian sojourn, there is evidence that Alexander did not forget his master. When he made his expedition to the East, he took Aristotle's nephew, Callisthenes, as his historian, and to further Aristotle's scientific researches, he appointed men to collect materials and specimens.

After the accession of Alexander in 336, Aristotle returned to Athens, where his friend, Xenocrates, had become head of the Academy. He established the Lycaeum, which came to be known as the Peripatetic School from the path in its garden where he walked and talked with his pupils. The Lycaeum was an organized institution for the "cult of the Muses." It possessed extensive equipment, including maps and the largest library then collected in Europe. It had its regular dinners and even its plate, and Aristotle himself wrote rules for holding *symposia*. The staff of lecturers included Theophrastus and Eudemus.

The great body of the extant Aristotelian treatises probably represents the lectures which Aristotle delivered at the Lycaeum. It is not likely that all were written at this time; they had probably been growing since he first began teaching. His various works of compilation almost certainly belong to these last years. He drew up lists of the victors in the Pythian and Olympic games and a chronology of the Athenian drama, later the basis for dating the Greek plays. He organized the collection of one hundred and fifty-eight Greek constitutions, and his work *On the Athenian Constitution*, the only extant treatise of this collection, is thought to have provided the model for this research. He also drew up an account of the "customs of the barbarians" and a treatise on "cases of constitutional law." The results of his investigations in natural history are evident in his biological works, particularly the *History of Animals*.

With the death of Alexander in 323, Aristotle's life at the Lycaeum came to an abrupt end. Although Aristotle apparently had little relation with Alexander, especially after his nephew had been put to death for refusing to render oriental obeisance to him, the philosopher enjoyed the friendship and protection of Antipater, who governed Alexander's Greek affairs from Athens. The revolt of the Athenian party, following the news of Alexander's death, was directed against Antipater and through him it involved Aristotle. Charged with impiety for the elegy he had written to Hermias twenty years before, Aristotle recalled the fate of Socrates and fled to his mother's property in Chalcis, declaring, "I will not let the Athenians offend twice against philosophy."

Aristotle lived in Chalcis for only a few months. Writing to Antipater, he noted, "The more I am by myself, and alone, the fonder I have become of myths." He died in 322. His will discloses the care with which he put his affairs in order; he provided for his children and the disposition of his property in Stagira and Chalcis, left bequests for his household servants and directions for their freedom, directed that his body should be buried with that of his wife, as she had desired, and, as one of the arrangements for the observance of familial piety, ordered his executors to "set up in Stagira statues of life-size to Zeus and Athena the Saviours."



Aristotle teaching Alexander the Great.

FROM THE WISDOM OF ARISTOTLE

All men seek one goal: Success or happiness. The only way to achieve true success is to express yourself completely in service to society. First, have a definite, clear, practical ideal—a goal, an objective. Second, have the necessary means to achieve your ends—wisdom, money, materials and methods. Third, adjust all your means to that end.

Happiness itself is sufficient excuse. Beautiful things are right and true; so beautiful actions are those pleasing to the gods. Wise men have an inward sense of what is beautiful, and the highest wisdom is to trust this intuition and be guided by it. The answer to the last appeal of what is right lies within a man's own breast. Trust thyself.

The high-minded man is fond of conferring benefits, but it shames him to receive them.

One may go wrong in many different ways, but right only in one, which is why it is easy to fail and difficult to succeed—easy to miss the target and difficult to hit it.

Those who educate children well are more to be honored than even their parents, for these only give them life, those the art of living well.

The ideal man bears the accidents of life with dignity and grace, making the best of the circumstances.

All that one gains by falsehood is, not to be believed when he speaks the truth.

The high-minded man does not bear grudges, for it is not the mark of a great soul to remember injuries, but to forget them.

I count him braver who overcomes his desires than him who conquers his enemies; for the hardest victory is the victory over self.

We should, as far as is possible, make ourselves immortal and strive to live by that part of ourselves which is most excellent.

Learning is an ornament in prosperity, a refuge in adversity, and a provision in old age.

It is not the possessions but the desires of men that must be equalized, and this is impossible unless they have sufficient education.

It is more difficult to organize peace than to win a war; but the fruits of victory will be lost if the peace is not well organized.

Meanness is incurable; it cannot be cured by old age, or by anything else.

We must observe that in all matters of human action the too little and the too much are alike ruinous, as we can see in matters of strength and health. Too much and too little exercise impair the strength, and too much meat and drink and too little both alike destroy the health, but the fitting amount produces and preserves them. So, too, the man who takes his fill of every pleasure and abstains from none becomes a profligate; while he who shuns all becomes stolid and insusceptible.

Some men are just as firmly convinced of what they think as others are of what they know.

All who have meditated on the art of governing mankind have been convinced that the fate of empires depends on the education of youth.

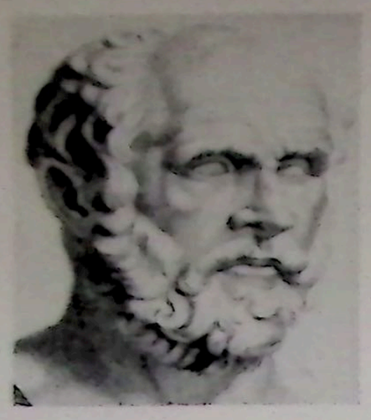
Anybody can become angry—that is easy; but to be angry with the right person, and to the right degree, and at the right time, and for the right purpose, and in the right way—that is not within everybody's power and is not easy.

All flatterers are mercenary, and all low-minded men are flatterers.

Dignity consists not in possessing honors, but in the consciousness that we deserve them.

The high-minded man must care more for the truth than for what people think.

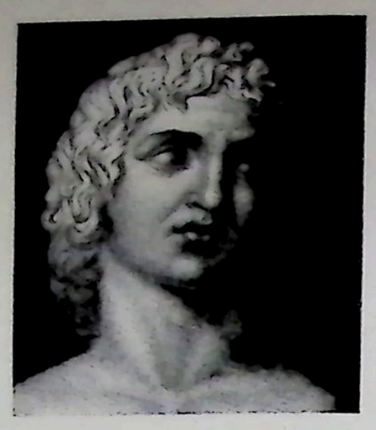
Educated men are as much superior to uneducated men as the living are to the dead.



APOLLONIUS

262-200 B.C.

Life is short to the fortunate, long to the unfortunate.



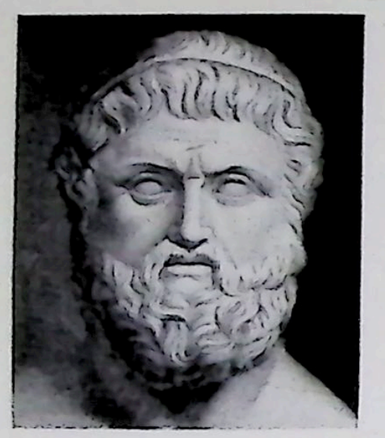
VIRGIL

70-19 B.C.

Every misfortune is subdued by patience.

SOPHOCLES

495-406 B.C.



A short saying often contains much wisdom.

TACITUS

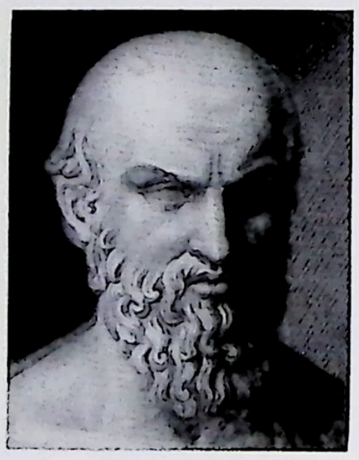
55-117

Intelligence and learning are more easily stamped out than revived.

EUCLID

300 B.C.

There is no royal path which leads to geometry.



AESCHYLUS

525-456 B.C.

Learning is ever young, even in old age.

EPICTETUS

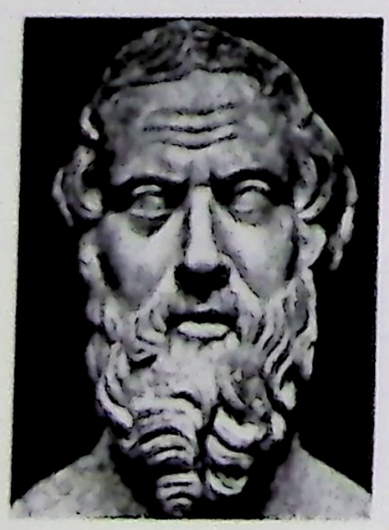
60-138

A ship ought not to be held by one anchor, nor life by a single hope.

PTOLEMY

100-178

We accomplish more by wisdom than by force.



HERODOTUS

484-425 B.C.

Men are dependent on circumstances, not circumstances on men.

HOMER

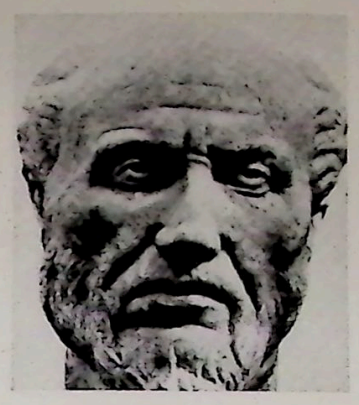
About 800 B.C.

As leaves on the trees, such is the life of man.

NICOMACHUS

100

Wonder grows where knowledge fails.



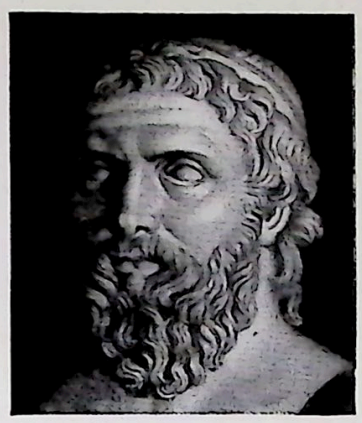
PLOTINUS

205-270

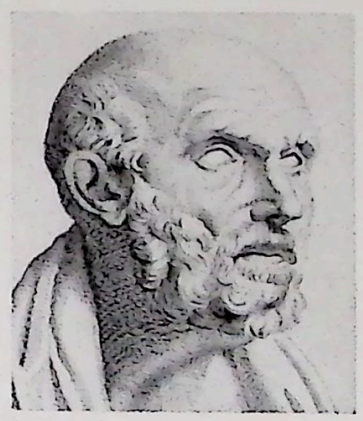
Beauty is rather a light that plays over the symmetry of things than that symmetry itself.

ARISTOPHANES

445-380 B.C.



The wise learn many things from their foes.



LUCRETIUS

98-55 B.C.

The greatest wealth is to live content with little, for there is never want where the mind is satisfied.

THUCYDIDES

460-400 B.C.

Ignorance is bold, and knowledge reserved.

PLUTARCH

46-120

Courage consists not in hazarding without fear, but being resolutely minded in a just cause.

ARCHIMEDES

287-212 B.C.

Give me a lever long enough, and a fulcrum strong enough, and single-handed I can move the world.

EURIPIDES

480-406 B.C.

Men pay for too much wisdom with much pain.

MARCUS AURELIUS

121-180

It is not death that a man should fear, but he should fear never beginning to live.

SAINT AUGUSTINE

AUGUSTINE was born November 13, 354, at Tagaste, a small town in the Roman province of Numidia, near what is now the eastern borders of Algeria. His father, although not wealthy, was an official in the Roman administration of the village and was then still a pagan. His mother, Monica, was already known as a fervent Christian. Both were probably of Roman stock, although they may have had some Numidian ancestry, and Augustine himself shows an acquaintance with the Punic language.

While still a child, Augustine was enrolled by his mother as a catechumen in the Catholic Church, and although not baptized, he learned something about Christianity from her. At the age of eleven or twelve, he was sent to Madaura, some twenty miles south of Tagaste, to study grammar and literature. He did so well that his father aspired to make a lawyer of him. Augustine spent a year of idleness while his father sought the necessary funds, and it was finally through the generosity of a citizen of Tagaste, who continued for some time as his patron, that in 370 he was able to go to Carthage for the course in rhetoric. Shortly after his arrival he began living with a woman with whom he remained for the next ten years and who bore him a son named Adeodatus. At the schools he had the reputation of being a quiet and studious young man. His reading of Cicero's *Hortensius,* he tells us, made him in love with philosophy. He also fell under the influence of the Manicheans and became an auditor, or beginner, in their sect, which claimed to reconcile philosophy and religion.

On completing his studies in 373, Augustine chose to follow letters rather than law as a career. After a year of teaching grammar at Tagaste, he established himself as a rhetorician at Carthage. In 377 he entered the poetry contest and won the prize with a dramatic poem. Not long afterwards, he wrote his first book, *On the Beautiful and the Fit,* which he later considered not worth preserving. In 383, motivated in part by his ambition as a rhetorician, Augustine went to Rome. His expectations were not realized, and a year later he accepted the municipal chair of rhetoric at Milan.

While at Rome, Augustine had abandoned Manicheism. At Milan he came under the influence of St. Ambrose and also began reading the Neo-Platonists. His ensuing development, recorded in the *Confessions,* culminated in the decision in 386 to become a Christian. That autumn he retired to the estate of a friend at Cassiciacum to prepare for entering the Catholic Church. Accompanying him were his mother, his son, and several friends and pupils—at least eight in all. Under the leadership of Augustine the group spent some time in philosophical discussion. The results were taken down, edited by Augustine, and published as the philosophical dialogues, *Against the Academics, On the Happy Life,* and *On Order.* The following spring he returned to Milan and on Holy Saturday was baptized by St. Ambrose.

Having become a Christian, Augustine decided to return to Africa and to lead a kind of monastic life with a few of his friends and pupils. While waiting for his departure, he worked at several books he had planned, including a series on the liberal arts, of which only one, *On Music,* has survived. The death of his mother, which occurred after they had reached Rome and were at the embarkation port of Ostia, delayed his return. For more than a year he remained in Rome, continued to work on his philosophical dialogues, and furthered his knowledge of Christian doctrine and practice. His first controversial work, *On the Morals of the Catholic Church and of the Manicheans,* was written at this time. It was not until 388 that Augustine with his son and two friends reached Tagaste. He sold his property, gave the proceeds to the poor, and with his few followers set up a kind of monastery devoted to a life of prayer and study. His son, Adeodatus, who was one of the group and whose education had been a particular care of Augustine's, died in 389.

In 391 Augustine's quiet monastic life was brought suddenly to an end. He happened to be on a visit to Hippo and was attending church when the aged bishop was urging his congregation to find a candidate for the priesthood. Augustine, despite his protestations, was immediately chosen, and the bishop ordained him as a priest. Later that year he moved his monastery to Hippo and began his sacerdotal duties. Although it was then customary for preaching to be reserved for the bishop, Augustine even as a priest was assigned that task. He began his sermons on the Scriptures, which, transcribed as they were delivered, constitute his many books of commentary on the Bible. He also began the public disputes with the African heretics which were to engage him for the rest of his life.

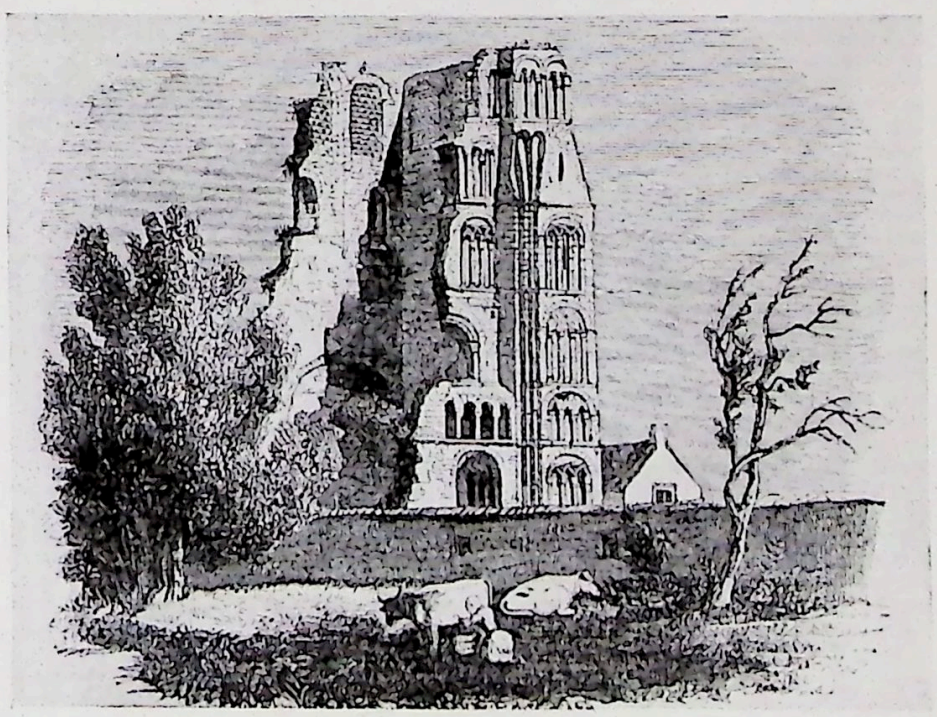
In 395 or 396 Augustine was called upon to assume what he called the "burden of the episcopate." For thirty-five years as the Bishop of Hippo nearly all of his energies were given to the defense and promotion of the Catholic Church in northern Africa. He took an influential part in many councils.

However onerous and varied his duties, Augustine always found time to write. In 397 he wrote the first three books, *On Christian Doctrine;* the final book was not completed until thirty years later. At the same time he also began his *Confessions,* and the completed work seems to have been published by 400. He had no sooner finished that than he began one of his greatest doctrinal treatises, *On the Trinity.* Following the sack of Rome in 410, he was drawn into the controversy regarding the responsibility of Christianity for the fall of the "eternal city," and into a correspondence with two Roman officials on the relation of the Church and the Empire. Out of such reflections he seems to have conceived the *City of God,* which was begun in 413 and appeared serially for thirteen years.

In 426 Augustine arranged for his successor as Bishop of Hippo. Considering it useful "to compile and point out all those things which displease me in my works," he read through all his writings and in his *Retractions* noted down what revisions he would make in their doctrine. In the work as he left it, he comments on two hundred and thirty-two separate titles, not including his letters and sermons, which were to have been considered in a separate account.

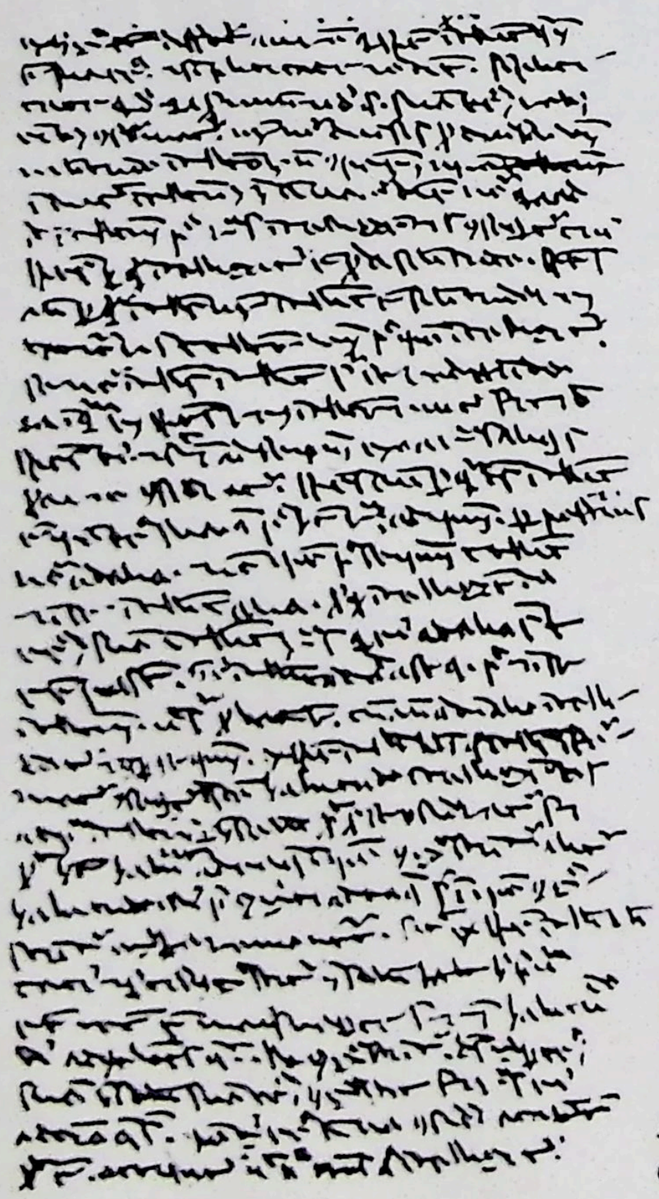
While Augustine was engaged in this task, North Africa was becoming involved in what amounted to civil war. Vandals from Spain had been invited to Africa, to help in the fight against the imperial forces, but it was soon evident that they came not to aid but in their own interest. In 430 the imperial forces were defeated and sought refuge in Hippo, where they were besieged by the Vandal army. There, when the siege was in its third month, Augustine died, August 28, 430.

Augustine, at the age of 12, attended a school where he studied Latin literature and grammar.



Ruins of the Augustine Monastery, Canterbury.

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS



Handwriting of Aquinas from an original manuscript.

AT THE end of 1224 or the beginning of 1225 Thomas was born at Roccasecca, near Naples, in the ancestral castle of the counts of Aquino. He was the seventh and youngest son of Landulfo, the head of one of the most illustrious families of Southern Italy and nephew to Frederick Barbarossa. His mother, Countess Teodora Carracciolo, was a descendent of the Normans who wrested Sicily from the Saracens. Landulfo and his sons were closely involved in the struggle between Frederick II and the pope, and in 1229 they besieged and plundered the papal stronghold of Monte Cassino. In connection with the peace settlement of the following year, Thomas, who was then in his fifth year, was sent to the Abbey as an oblate with the hope that he would one day become its abbot. His stay there lasted for nine years, during which he received his preliminary education. In 1239 the emperor again attacked Monte Cassino, and Thomas returned to his family.

To continue his education Thomas attended the University of Naples, where he followed the course in liberal arts. While there he became acquainted with the Dominicans, who had opened a school of theology as part of the university. In 1244 Thomas, against the wishes of his family, took the habit of the Dominicans and set out for Paris with the master-general to study theology. His father had recently died, and his mother, in an effort to alter Thomas' decision, sent her two elder sons from the imperial army to seize him and hold him prisoner. He did not obtain his release until the following year after the Dominicans had appealed to both the pope and the emperor and his family had discovered that nothing could shake his determination.

Arriving in Paris in 1245, Thomas began his theology at the Dominican convent. His master there was Albert the Great, who was beginning to be known as the champion of Aristotle, whose complete works, recovered from Arabic sources, were coming into general use at the University of Paris. When Albert was appointed to organize a Dominican house of studies at Cologne in 1248, he took Thomas with him as his particular student. After four years more of study, Thomas received his baccalaureate and, on the recommendation of his master, was sent back to Paris to teach and to prepare for becoming a master in theology.

In 1252 Thomas entered upon the teaching career to which he was to devote the rest of his life and which was to involve him in every great intellectual conflict of the time. The university required that a master in theology be at least thirty-four years old; Thomas, after a papal dispensation, was given his degree in 1256, when little more than thirty-one, and appointed to fill one of the two chairs allowed the Dominicans.

Almost immediately after entering upon his university career, Thomas was called upon to defend the right of the new religious orders to teach at the university. Thomas and his friend Bonaventure became respectively the spokesmen for the Dominicans and Franciscans against the charges made by the secular clerics of the university. Besides providing written refutation of their accusations, Thomas showed by his own teaching that the religious orders had all the necessary qualifications. As part of his work at this period he held during the three academic years between 1256 and 1259 the two hundred and fifty-three scholastic disputations which constitute his treatise *De veritate*. It was also at this time that he began, perhaps at the

request of the famous missionary, Raymond of Penafort, the *Summa contra Gentiles.*

In 1259, after three years of theological teaching as a master at Paris, Thomas returned to Italy. He remained there nine years, residing first at the papal curia at Anagni and Orvieto, then at the Dominican convent in Rome, and again with the pope at Viterbo. Offers to make him archbishop of Naples or abbot of Monte Cassino were turned down so that he might continue his teaching. He commented on the Scriptures, lectured on canon law, at the request of the pope compiled the *Catena Aurea* of the glosses on the Gospels, and wrote a work aiming at the reconciliation of the Greek church with Rome. On the institution of the feast of Corpus Christi, he was chosen to provide its liturgical office, for which he wrote the hymns, *Pange lingua gloriosi corporis mysterium, Sacris solemniis juncta sint gaudia,* and the *Verbum supernum prodiens.* Also with papal encouragement Thomas then began his exposition of the works of Aristotle. At the papal curia he met his confrere, William of Moerbeke, who at the suggestion of Thomas began a new translation of Aristotle direct from the Greek. Aided by a good text, free of the corruptions that characterized the versions taken from the Arabic, Thomas between 1265 and 1269 commented on the *Physics, Metaphysics, On the Soul, Ethics, Politics,* and the *Posterior Analytics.*

At the beginning of 1269 Thomas was suddenly called back to Paris, where the conflict over Aristotle was coming to a climax. His activity in large part consisted, on the one hand, in refuting the Latin Averroists of the Faculty of Arts who were presenting an Aristotelianism seemingly incompatible with Christianity, and, on the other, in combatting the Augustinians of the Theological Faculty who tended to look with disfavor upon the use of Aristotle in theology.

Thomas was recalled to Italy by his superiors in 1272 and charged with reorganizing all the theological courses of his order. Allowed the choice of location for his work, he returned to Naples. There at the university he lectured on the Psalms and St. Paul, commented on Aristotle's *On the Heavens* and *On Generation and Corruption,* and worked on the third part of the *Summa.* He also continued to write special treatises at the requests of his friends, as he had done throughout his life. At the very beginning of his career he had written for his fellow students the *De ente et essentia;* for the king of Cyprus he composed the *De regimine principum;* in the Platonic tradition he had commented on treatises of Boethius and the *Liber de causis,* which he showed was not a work of Aristotle; as his life drew to its close he composed numerous minor works on theology, including the *Compendium theologiae.*

The writing career of Thomas came suddenly to an end on December 6, 1273. While saying mass that morning a great change came over him, and afterwards he ceased to write or dictate. Urged by his companion to complete the *Summa,* he replied: "I can do no more; such things have been revealed to me that all I have written seems as straw, and I now await the end of my life." Early the following year he was appointed by Pope Gregory X to attend the General Council of Lyons. Overcome by illness shortly after his departure from Naples, he retired to the Cistercian monastery of Fossanova. There he commented on the *Song of Solomon* at the request of the monks, and died, March 7, 1274.

FROM THE WISDOM OF AUGUSTINE

The knowledge of Divine things may be properly called wisdom, and the knowledge of human affairs may properly receive the name of knowledge.

Men go abroad to admire the heights and mountains, the mighty billows of the sea, the long courses of rivers, the vast compass of the ocean, and the circular motion of the stars, and yet pass themselves by.

We can know what God is not, but we cannot know what He is.

Let your old age be childlike, and your childhood like old age; that is, so that neither may your wisdom be with pride, nor your humility without wisdom.

Cursed is every one who places his hope in man.

Conscience and reputation are two things. Conscience is due to yourself, reputation to your neighbor.

As the eye of the body cannot see unless it is helped by the brightness of light, so neither can a man, even if he is most righteous, live righteously unless he be helped by the eternal light of justice.

It is the duty of good education to arrive at wisdom by means of a definite order.

Every sin is more injury to him who does than to him who suffers it.

God does not hear us as man hears. Unless you shout with your lungs and chest and lips, a mere man does not hear; whereas to God your very thoughts shout.

If we tread our vices under our feet, we make of them a ladder by which to rise to higher things.

Just as the flattery of a friend can pervert, so the insult of an enemy can sometimes correct.

If the right distinction between wisdom and knowledge is that the intellectual cognizance of eternal things belongs to wisdom, but the rational cognizance of temporal things to knowledge, it is not difficult to judge which is to be preferred or postponed to which.

If we ask what it is to live well—that is, to strive after happiness by living well—it must assuredly be to love virtue, to love wisdom, to love truth, and to love with all the heart, with all the soul, and with all the mind: Virtue which is inviolable and immutable, wisdom which never gives place to folly, truth which knows no change or variation from its uniform character.

Go not abroad; retire into yourself, for truth dwells in the inner man.

It seems to me that every lie is truly a sin, although it makes a great difference with what intention and in what matter a man lies.

Patience is the companion of wisdom.

There is nothing so laborious as not to labor. Blessed is he who devotes his life to great and noble ends, and who forms his well-considered plans with deliberate wisdom.

Ambrosius, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas and other saints as painted by Raphael.

FROM THE WISDOM OF AQUINAS

Man has different kinds of knowledge, according to the different objects of his knowledge. He has intelligence as regards the knowledge of principles; he has science as regards knowledge of conclusions; he has wisdom, according as he knows the highest cause; he has counsel or prudence, according as he knows what is to be done.

Arrive at knowledge over small streamlets, and do not plunge immediately into the ocean, since progress must go from the easier to the more difficult.

Because philosophy arises from awe, a philosopher is bound in his way to be a lover of myths and poetic fables. Poets and philosophers are alike in being big with wonder.

There is nothing that the Divine Mind does not understand actually, nor the human mind potentially.

For prayer to be effective our petitions should be for benefits worthily to be expected from God.

God is not confined in time, for He is eternal, and without beginning or end. His being is constant, ever present, never altering from past to future. Nothing can be taken away from Him, nothing added.

God has no need for our worship. It is we who need to show our gratitude for what we have received.

Theology deserves to be called the highest wisdom, for everything is viewed in the light of the first cause.

Temperance is a disposition of the mind which sets bounds to the passions.

The gift of knowledge makes for the correct management of temporal matters and shows us how to lead good lives in the midst of wicked persons; understanding enables us to study the Creator and His invisible creation; wisdom affords us the contemplation solely of eternal truth and a delight in it.

DANTE

DANTE ALIGHIERI was born in Florence about the middle of May, 1265. It seems probable that he received his early education at the Franciscan school at Santa Croce. He evidently owed much to the influence of Brunetto Latina, the philosopher and scholar who figured largely in the councils of the Florentine commune. Before twenty, he began writing poetry and became associated with the Italian poets of the "sweet new style," who exalted their love and their ladies in philosophical verse. Upon turning thirty, Dante became actively involved in Florentine politics. He participated in the deliberations of the councils, served on a special embassy, and in 1300 was elected one of the six priors that governed the city. In 1302 Dante was charged with corruption in office. He was condemned to pay a fine of five thousand florins within three days or lose his property, exiled for two years, and denied the right ever again to hold public office. Three months later, upon his refusal to pay the fine, Dante was condemned to be burned alive if he should come within the power of the republic.

The election of Henry of Luxemburg as emperor in 1308 stirred Dante's political hopes. When Henry entered Italy in 1310 at the head of an army, Dante in an epistle to the princes and people of Italy hailed the coming of a deliverer. At Milan he paid personal homage to Henry as his sovereign. When Florence, in alliance with King Robert of Naples, prepared to resist the emperor, Dante in a second epistle denounced them for their obstinacy and prophesied their doom. In a third epistle he upbraided the Emperor himself for his delay and urged him on against Florence. It was probably during this period that he wrote his *De Monarchia*, an intellectual defense of the emperor. The city of Florence in 1311 and again in 1315 renewed his condemnation.

After Henry's death, Dante passed the rest of his life under the protection of various lords of Lombardy, Tuscany, and the Romagna. According to one tradition, he retired for a time to the monastery of Santa Croce di Fonte Avellana in the Appenines, where he worked on the *Divine Comedy*, which may have been planned as early as 1292. He was almost certainly for a time at the court of Can Grande della Scala, to whom he dedicated the *Paradiso*. In 1315 Florence issued a general recall of exiles. Dante refused to pay the required fine and to "bear the brand of oblation," feeling that such a return would derogate from his fame and honor. To the end of his life he appears to have hoped that his *Comedy* would finally open the gates of the city to him.

The last few years of the poet's life were spent at Ravenna, under the patronage of Guido do Polenta, a nephew of Francesca da Minini. Dante's daughter, Beatrice, was a nun in that city, and one of his sons held a benefice there; his wife seems to have resided in Florence throughout his exile. Dante was greatly esteemed at Ravenna and enjoyed a congenial circle of friends. Here he completed the *Divine Comedy* and wrote two eclogues in Latin which indicate that a certain contentment surrounded his closing days. Returning from a diplomatic mission to Venice on behalf of his patron, he caught a fever and died September 14, 1321. He was buried at Ravenna before the door of the principal church, with the highest honors, and "in the habit of a poet and a great philosopher."

FROM THE WISDOM OF DANTE

He is not to be called a true lover of wisdom who loves it for the sake of gain. And it may be said that the true philosopher loves every part of wisdom and wisdom every part of the philosopher, inasmuch as she draws all to herself, and allows no one of his thoughts to wander to other things.

It is necessity and not pleasure that compels us.

Art, as far as it is able, follows nature, as a pupil imitates his master; thus your art must be, as it were, God's grandchild.

Let there be no doubt in the mind of the man who has benefited from the common heritage but does not trouble to contribute to the common good that he is failing sadly in his duty. For he is not a tree beside the running waters bearing fruit in due season but rather a vicious whirlpool, forever swallowing things but never throwing them up again.

There is no greater sorrow than to recall, in misery, the time when we were happy.

It is the wisest who grieve most at loss of time.

The greatest gift which God in His bounty bestowed in creating, and the most conformed to His own goodness, and that which He prizes the most, was the freedom of the will, with which the creatures that have intelligence, they all and they alone, were and are endowed.

Consider your origin; you were not formed to live like brutes, but to follow virtue and knowledge.

Every one confusedly conceives of a good in which the mind may be at rest, and desires it; wherefore every one strives to attain to it.

Concord is a harmonious movement of several wills.

Faith is the substance of things hoped, and proof of things invisible to mortal sight.

Doubting charms me not less than knowledge.

Right is a relation existing between human beings in their dealings with each other and in their dealings with things. When right is maintained, human society is preserved, but when it is neglected society is corrupted.

Universal peace is the most excellent means of securing our happiness.

NICOLÒ MACHIAVELLI

PRACTICALLY nothing is known of Machiavelli before he became a minor official in the Florentine Government. His youth, however, was passed during some of the most tumultuous years in the history of Florence. He was born the year that Lorenzo the Magnificent came to power, subverting the traditional civil liberty of Florence while inaugurating a reign of unrivalled luxury and of great brillance for the arts. He was twenty-five at the time of Savonarola's attempt to establish a theocratic democracy, although, from the available evidence, he himself took no part in it. Yet through his family he was closer to these events than many Florentine citizens. The Machiavellis for generations had held public office, and his father was a jurist and a minor official. Machiavelli himself, shortly after the execution of Savonarola, became Secretary of the Second Chancery, which was to make him widely known among his contemporaries as the "Florentine Secretary."

By virtue of his position Machiavelli served the "Ten of Liberty and Peace," who sent their own ambassadors to foreign powers, transacted business with the cities of the Florentine domain, and controlled the military establishment of Florence. During the fourteen years he held office, Machiavelli was placed in charge of the diplomatic correspondence of his bureau, served as Florentine representative on nearly thirty foreign missions, and attempted to organize a citizen militia to replace the mercenary troops.

In his diplomatic capacity, which absorbed most of his energies, he dealt for the most part with the various principalities into which Italy was divided. His more important missions, however, gave him an insight into the politics of Europe as well as of Italy. In 1500 he was sent to the court of the King of France, where he met the mightiest minister in Europe, Cardinal d'Amboise. On this occasion he began the observation and analysis of national political forces which were to find expression in his diplomatic reports. His *Report on France* was written after he had completed three assignments for his office in that country; the *Report on Germany* was prepared as a result of a mission to the court of Emperor Maximilian.

The most important mission, in view of his later development as a political writer, was that, in 1502, to the camp of Cesare Borgia, Duke Valentino. Under the aegis of his father, Pope Alexander VI, Cesare was engaged in consolidating the Papal States, and Machiavelli was in attendance upon him at the time of his greatest triumph. Machiavelli had several audiences with Cesare and witnessed the intrigues culminating in the murder of his disaffected captains, which he carefully described in the *Method Adopted by Duke Valentine to murder Vitellozzo Vitelli.* As the "Florentine Secretary," he was also present a few months later at Rome when Cesare came to ruin and disgrace upon the death of Alexander VI.

During his diplomatic career Machiavelli enjoyed one outstanding success. Largely through his efforts, Florence obtained the surrender of Pisa, which had revolted from Florentine rule and maintained its independence for years. Although he did not achieve any other diplomatic triumphs, he was esteemed for the excellence of his reports and is known to have had the confidence of the president of Florence, the Gonfalonier, Piero Soderini. But with the restoration of the Medicis to power, in 1512, Machiavelli's public career came abruptly to an end. His efforts to ingratiate himself with the new masters proved ineffectual. Looked upon with disfavor as the ex-gonfalonier's man, he was deprived of his office and exiled from the city for a year. He then fell under suspicion, although unjustly, of being implicated in a conspiracy against the new government. He was imprisoned and tortured on the rack and was released only when Giovanni de Medici became Pope.

On his release from his dungeon, Machiavelli with his wife and children retired to a small farm not far from Florence. Dividing his time between farming and petty dissipations, he lamented that, possessing nothing but "knowledge of the State," he had no occasion for using it. The only remaining link with the official world was his friend, the Florentine ambassador to the Pope, to whom he wrote of public affairs and of his private amorous adventures. His letters reveal, however, that he led a hidden life by night in his study. "At the threshold," he wrote, "I take off my work-day clothes, filled with dust and mud, and don royal and curial garments. Worthily dressed, I enter into the ancient courts of the men of antiquity, where, warmly received, I feed on that which is my only food and which was meant for me. I am not ashamed to speak with them and ask them the reasons of their actions, and they, because of their humanity, answer me. Four hours can pass, and I feel no weariness; my troubles forgotten, I neither fear poverty nor dread death. I give myself over entirely to them. And since Dante says that there can be no science without retaining what has been understood, I have noted down the chief things in their conversation."

He "conversed" most frequently with Livy, Aristotle, and Polybius, and composed his principal works upon politics: the *Discourses upon the First Decade of Livy,* and the *Prince* (1513). He intrigued to bring his work to the attention of the Medici rulers. He did not succeed in this, however, until he turned from politics to drama. The comedies he wrote during these years of retirement were acclaimed by the Florentine gentility. The *Mandragola* was so successful that it was performed before Pope Leo X in 1520.

Largely because of the fame he had acquired as a writer, Machiavelli was asked by the Medici rulers to give advice on the government of Florence. He used the occasion to re-state and defend republican principles in his *Discourse on Reforming the State of Florence.* He was also commissioned to write a history of the city and produced his *Florentine History.* However, it was not until the last years of his life that he was recalled to an active role in public work. He was appointed by Pope Clement VII to organize a national militia, such as he had defended in his *Art of War.* But he received little help from the men with whom he had to work, and his efforts came to nothing when the troops of Emperor Charles V sacked Rome and put an end to all of Clement's plans.

Shortly before Machiavelli's death the Republic was re-established in Florence. Although he had never been able to regain public office in Florence under the Medicis, he still seemed too close to them to be acceptable to the new republican government. His request to be reinstated in his old position as Florentine Secretary was refused. Machiavelli died a few days later on June 20, 1527.

FROM THE WISDOM OF MACHIAVELLI

There are three classes of intellects: One which comprehends by itself; another which appreciates what others comprehend; and a third which neither comprehends by itself nor by the showing of others; the first is the most excellent, the second is good, the third is useless.

A man's wisdom is most conspicuous where he is able to distinguish among dangers and make choice of the least.

Where the willingness is great, the difficulties cannot be great.

Ambition is so powerful a passion in the human breast, that however high we reach we are never satisfied.

I desire to go to Hell, not to Heaven. In Hell I shall enjoy the company of popes, kings and princes, but in Heaven are only beggars, monks, hermits and apostles.

It is not titles that honor men, but men that honor titles.

Men are more apt to be mistaken in their generalizations than in their particular observations.

Among all excellent and illustrious men those are most praiseworthy who have been the authors of religion and divine worship; next come the founders of states; then come successful generals who have enlarged their own kingdom or the dominion of their country. To these are to be added literary men of all kinds, according to their several degrees; and lastly, as being the greatest number, come the artificers, and mechanics.

There is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things.

New benefits cannot obliterate old injuries.

In the nature of man we find three principal causes of quarrel. First, competition; secondly, diffidence; thirdly, glory. The first makes men invade for gain; the second, for safety; the third, for reputation.

A son could bear with great complacency the death of his father, while the loss of his inheritance might drive him to despair.

In all our resolves we must decide which is the line of conduct that presents the fewest drawbacks and then follow it out as being the best one, because one never finds anything perfectly pure and unmixed, or exempt from danger.

Speaking generally, men are ungrateful, fickle, hypocritical, fearful of danger, and covetous of gain.

The world has always been the same; and there is always as much good fortune as bad in it.

When neither their property nor their honor is touched, the majority of men live content.

Whoever takes it upon himself to establish a commonwealth and prescribe laws must presuppose all men naturally bad, and that they will yield to their innate evil passions as often as they can do so with safety.

As laws are necessary that good manners may be preserved, so good manners are necessary that laws may be maintained.

A wise man will see to it that his acts always seem voluntary and not done by compulsion, however much he may be compelled by necessity.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

SHAKESPEARE was baptized in the parish church of Stratford-on-Avon in Warwickshire on April 26, 1564. His father, John Shakespeare, was a burgess of the recently constituted corporation of Stratford, and filled certain municipal offices, including that of high bailiff. By occupation he was a glover, although he appears to have dealt from time to time in various kinds of agricultural produce and may have combined a certain amount of farming with the practice of his trade. His wife, and the mother of the dramatist, Mary Arden, came of a distinguished Catholic family, and had brought her husband a farm of about fifty or sixty acres, known as the Asbies. There were at least eight children, William being the third child and eldest son.

Stratford possessed a free grammar-school, and Shakespeare presumably obtained his education there. When he was about thirteen, his father's fortunes took a turn for the worse, and it seems likely that Shakespeare was apprenticed to some local trade. According to one story, he killed calves for his father, and "would do it in a high style, and make a speech." In November, 1582, he married Anne Hathaway, a woman eight years his senior, and their first child, Susanna, was baptized on May 26, 1583, followed by twins, Hamnet and Judith, in 1585. Before the birth of the twins Shakespeare's career in Stratford seems to have come to a tempestuous close. One tradition, coming from two different sources, asserts that he got into trouble through poaching on the estates of a considerable Warwickshire magnate, Sir Thomas Lucy, and found it necessary to leave town. But from this event until he emerges as an actor and rising playwright in 1592, his history is unknown. His entry into the theatrical world, according to the stage tradition, was in a menial capacity, perhaps even as a holder of horses at the doors.

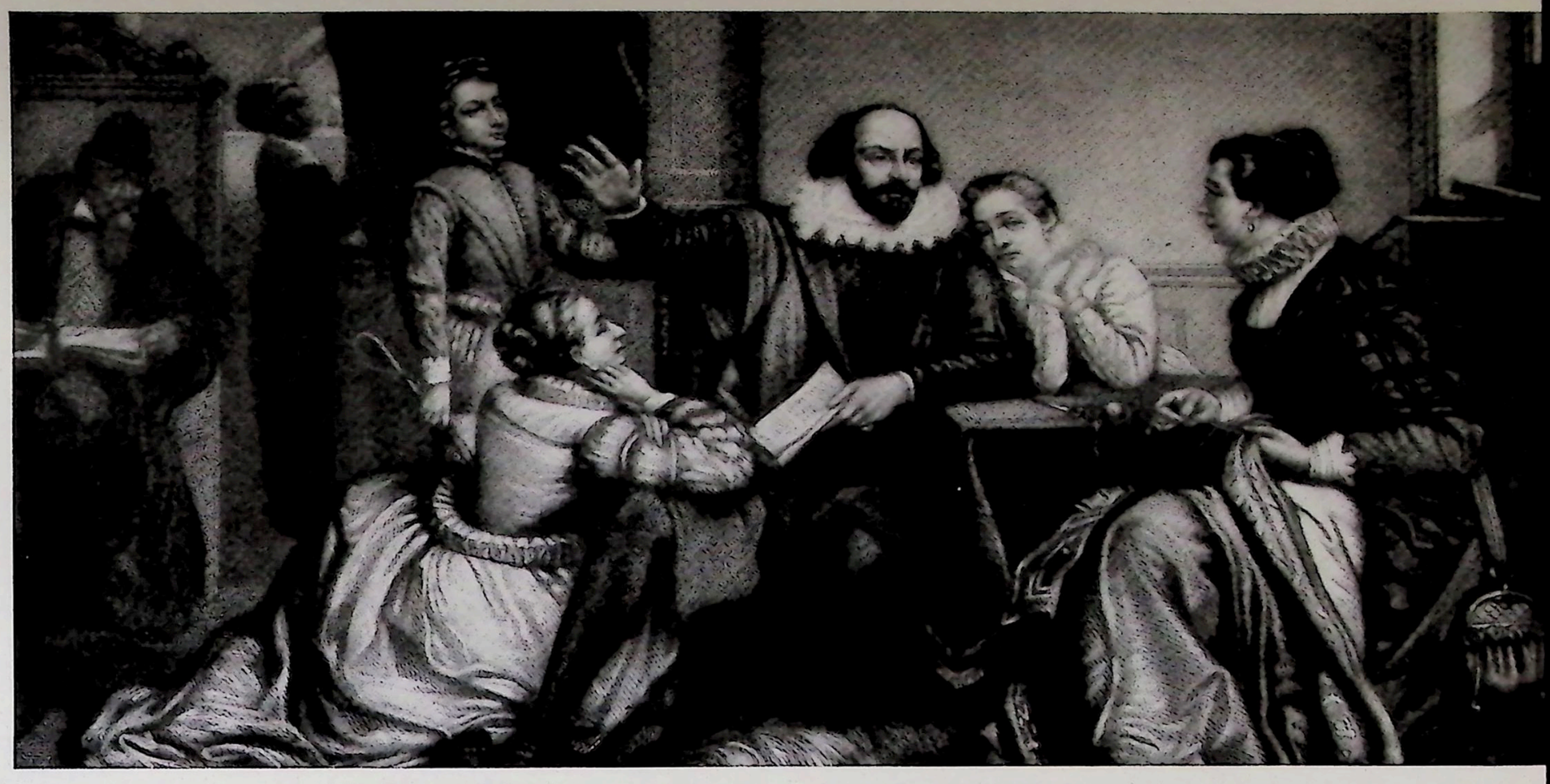
By 1592, when he was twenty-eight, Shakespeare had begun to emerge as a playwright and had evoked the jealousy of at least one of the group of scholar poets who claimed a monopoly of the stage. Robert Greene, in an invective against the play-actors in his *Groats-worth of Wit*, parodies a line from *Henry VI* and speaks of an "upstart crow" who is "in his own conceit the only Shake-scene in the country."

After the reopening of the theatres in 1594, Shakespeare is listed among the "servauntes of the Lord Chamberlayne," the company for which he wrote and acted throughout his life. His acting seems to have been limited to such roles as the Ghost in *Hamlet* and Adam in *As You Like It,* but as a dramatist he was the mainstay of the company for some fifteen years. As early as 1598 the *Palladis Tamia,* a kind of literary handbook published by Francis Meres, extols Shakespeare as "the most excellent in both kinds (*i.e.*, comedy and tragedy) for the state," and one of "the most passionate among us to bewaile and bemoane the perplexities of love"; it also provides a list of twelve plays already written, which serves as a starting point for modern attempts at a chronological arrangement of his work. Shakespeare seems to have written more rapidly during these early years than later, but on an average he wrote for his company about two plays a year. His fellow-dramatists writing for the Chamberlain's men included Ben Jonson, Dekker, Beaumont and Fletcher, and Tourneur. He seems to have been particularly intimate with Jonson; there are stories of their jests and drinking bouts.

In addition to being both actor and playwright, Shakespeare was also a share-holder in the company, and his prosperity was joined with that of his theatre. They were frequently asked to play at Court, and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* is said to owe its origin to Elizabeth's desire to see Falstaff in love. James I on his accession took the company under his patronage, and during the remainder of Shakespeare's connection with the stage they were "the King's men." The records of performances at court show that they were by far the most favored of the companies.

Shakespeare's increasing prosperity is reflected in the restored fortunes of his family at Stratford. The prosecutions of John Shakespeare for debt ceased, and in 1596 his application for a coat-of-arms, made at the time he was bailiff, was at length granted. In 1597 the playwright purchased New Place, one of the largest houses in Stratford. Here he established his wife and two daughters, his son having died the year before. Until 1610 he apparently lived and worked in London, making only occasional visits to Stratford, but in that year he seems to have returned to his birthplace. He lived as a retired gentleman on friendly terms with the richest of his neighbors and showed interest in local affairs which might affect his income or his comfort, such as a bill for the improvement of the highways in 1611, or a proposed enclosure of the open fields in 1614. His retirement did not imply a complete break with London life; his plays were still being produced, and he was providing new ones, although the last few may have been written at Stratford. As late as 1613 he is known to have bought a house in London at the Blackfriars, perhaps for purposes of investment rather than residence. It is likely that his connection with the king's company ended when the Globe theatre was burnt down during a performance of *Henry VIII* in 1613.

In March of 1616 Shakespeare made his will, leaving to his daughter Susanna the bulk of his estate and to his wife "the second best bed with the furniture," although she also legally enjoyed until her death a third of his lands and houses. A month after his will was signed, on April 23, 1616, Shakespeare died and as a tithe-owner was buried in the chancel of the parish church.



Shakespeare reading one of his plays to his family.

FROM THE WISDOM OF SHAKESPEARE

God give them wisdom that have it; and those that are fools, let them use their talents.

Of all knowledge, the wise and good seek most to know themselves.

Conversation should be pleasant without scurrility, witty without affectation, free without indecency, learned without conceitedness, novel without falsehood.

Make not your thoughts your prisons.

Gold is worse than poison to men's souls, doing more murders in this loathsome world, than any mortal drug.

Give every man your ear, but few your voice; take each man's censure, but reserve your judgment.

Every braggart shall be found an ass.

Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player, that struts and frets his hour upon the stage, and then is heard no more; it is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.

Kindness in women, not their beauteous looks, shall win my love.

A miser grows rich by seeming poor; an extravagant man grows poor by seeming rich.

How bitter a thing it is to look into happiness through another man's eyes!

A gentleman that loves to hear himself talk will speak more in a minute than he will stand to in a month.

Our bodies are our gardens, to the which our wills are gardeners.

Ignorance is the curse of God; knowledge is the wing wherewith we fly to heaven.

He that loves to be flattered is worthy of the flatterer.

I think the king is but a man, as I am: The violet smells to him as it does to me.

Good name, in man or woman, is the immediate jewel of their souls. Who steals my purse steals trash; but he that filches from me my good name, robs me of that which not enriches him, and makes me poor indeed.

Each present joy or sorrow seems the chief.

An enterprise, when once begun, should not be left till all is won.

All the world's a stage, and all the men and women in it merely players. They have their exits and their entrances; and one man in his time plays many parts.

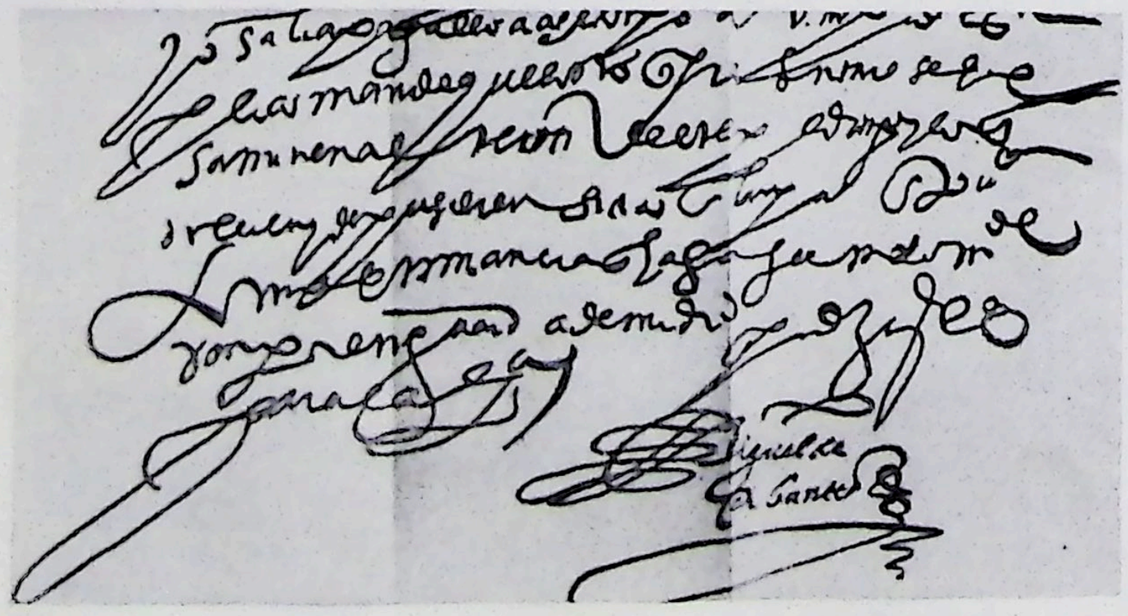
How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child!

Maids want nothing but husbands, and when they have them, they want everything.

Better a witty fool that a foolish wit.

Be not afraid of greatness: Some are born great, some achieve greatness and some have greatness thrust upon them.

MIGUEL DE CERVANTES



CERVANTES was born in the ancient university town of Alcala de Henares, where he was baptized, October 9, 1547, in the church of Santa Maria la Mayor. His father was a travelling physician, and it is doubtful whether the family was ever long enough in one place for Cervantes to receive any formal education. According to his own testimony he enjoyed reading from childhood and took especial delight in the dramatic productions of the famous actor-manager, Lope de Rueda. At the age of twenty he made his first appearance as an author, contributing several poems to a volume.

Shortly after his debut as a writer Cervantes was in Rome as a member of the retinue of Cardinal Acquaviva. He soon left the Cardinal to enlist as a private in the army which was being mustered to fight against the Turks. He was assigned to the "Marquesa," part of the armada under Don John of Austria. When the fleet came into action at Lepanto, Cervantes lay below, ill with fever. Despite the remonstrances of his comrades, he insisted that he would "rather die for his God and his King" than stay under cover. He received three gunshot wounds, two in the chest and one which maimed his left hand for life; to Cervantes the wounds were "stars lighting one to heaven and to fame," and the left hand was crippled "for the greater glory of the right." After convalescing at Messina, he returned to the army, served three more years in active service, and then was granted leave to return to Spain.

The small galley carrying Cervantes back to Spain was attacked by Barbary corsairs near Les Trois Maries, and he, his brother, and the other Spaniards were taken as prisoners to Algiers. Cervantes became the slave of a Greek renegade named Dali Mami, and, since the letters found on him suggested that he was a man of some importance, his ransom was posted at an unusually high figure. He found the life of a captive "enough to sadden the merriest heart on earth" and made many ingenious attempts to escape. Upon the failure of one of them he was brought before the Dey of Algiers, Hassan Pasha, and "threatened with torture and instant death"; but the Dey, struck "by his peculiar grace in all things," remitted the punishment and bought Cervantes for himself. In 1577 he addressed a versified letter to the Spanish Secretary of State, suggesting an expedition to seize Algiers; the project, although practicable, was not attempted. In 1579, after another thwarted escape, Hassan Pasha again spared his life, declaring: "So long as I have the maimed Spaniard in my keeping, my Christians, my ships—aye, and the whole city—are safe." The Dey, however, was willing to release him for money, and Cervantes finally obtained his freedom.

After his release Cervantes returned to Spain, where he tried to support himself by writing, particularly for the stage. Of the great volume of plays he wrote, he later singled out only one for praise, *La Confusa,*

"which, with all respect to as many sword-and-cloak plays as have been staged up to the present, may take a prominent place as being good among the best." His most serious effort at this time was the prose-pastoral Galatea (1585), and, although it always remained his favorite work, he later remarked that it "proposes something and concludes nothing." The *Galatea* won him a small measure of repute but brought him no financial return.

The death of his father and his own marriage made it necessary for him to "put aside the pen." His wife's dowry brought him nothing more valuable than five vines, an orchard, some household furniture, four bee-hives, forty-five hens and chickens, one cock, and a crucible. He went to Seville as commissary to provide oil and wheat for the Armada and, after its defeat, continued to act as commissary to the galleys. Although he showed considerable zeal in the work, he soon became convinced that there was no prospect of advancement. He appealed to the king for a vacant post in the American colonies but was refused and given the advice to "look for something nearer home." In an effort to supplement his income, he turned again to writing, and, in 1952, signed a contract to write six plays at fifty ducats each, on the condition that no payment was to be made unless each was "one of the best ever produced in Spain." No opportunity to test the contract arose, since Cervantes was thrown into jail. Although the reason for this imprisonment is not known, it was probably due to disorderliness in his accounts, for shortly after his release, he was in difficulty again with his superiors. When he proved unable to submit receipts for all official moneys he had collected, though no charge of dishonesty was proved, he was again committed to jail. Subsequently he was released in disgrace and dismissed from public service.

Don Quixote appeared during the years of extreme poverty that succeeded his dismissal. From the remark in the prologue that "you may suppose it engendered in some dismal prison," it has been assumed that its conception, if not some of its actual writing, took place during one of his terms in jail. The license for its publication was obtained in 1604, while Cervantes was living in Valladolid in a tiny apartment with his wife and four or five female relatives. A few months after its publication the following year, Don Quixote and Sancho Panza had become proverbial types in Valladolid; and they were soon know throughout Europe. The appearance in 1614 of a spurious second part, issued under the name of Alonso Fernandez de Avellanada, goaded Cervantes to lay aside his other writing and complete his master work, which he accomplished by the end of 1615. During the decade between the two parts of *Quixote,* Cervantes wrote his *Exemplary Novels,* the *Journey to Parnassus,* and several comedies and intermezzos for the theatre.

Although Cervantes was known and celebrated throughout Europe, his fame never brought him wealth, or even comfort. The members of the special French embassay visiting Madrid in 1615 were amazed to learn that Cervantes was "old, a soldier, a gentleman, and poor." He died in Madrid on the same day as William Shakespeare, April 23, 1616. He was borne from his house with "his face uncovered," according to the rule of the Tertiaries of St. Francis, and buried in the church attached to the convent of the Trinitarian nuns.

Don Quixote studies great books of chivalry.

FROM THE WISDOM OF CERVANTES

Blessings on him who invented sleep, the mantle that covers all human thoughts, the food that appeases hunger, the drink that quenches thirst, the fire that warms cold, the cold that moderates heat, and, lastly, the general coin that purchases all things, the balance and weight that equals the shepherd with the king, and the simple with the wise.

The pen is the tongue of the mind.

Fortune turns round like a mill-wheel, and he who was yesterday at the top, lies today at the bottom.

A wise man does not trust all his eggs to one basket.

The little birds of the field have God for their caterer.

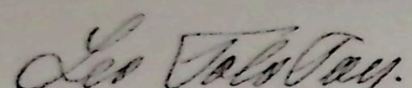
I had rather munch a crust of brown bread and an onion in a corner, without ado or ceremony, than feed upon a turkey at another man's table, where I am forced to chew slowly, drink little, wipe my mouth every minute, and cannot sneeze or cough, or do other things that are the privileges of liberty and solitude.

A private sin is not so prejudicial in this world as a public indecency.

An honest man's word is as good as his bond.

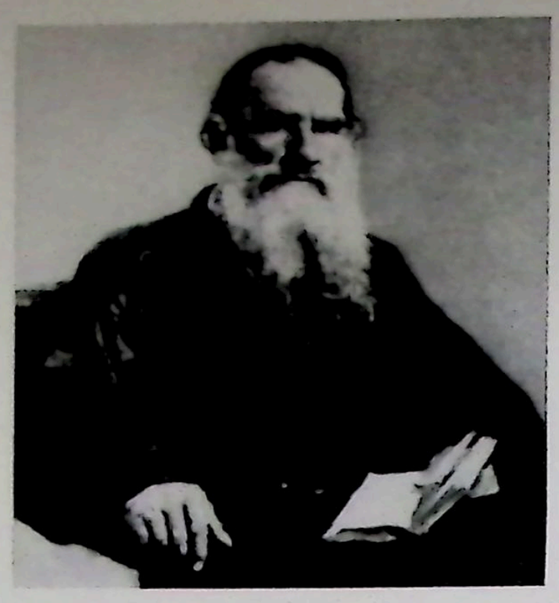
One of the effects of fear is to disturb the senses and cause things to appear other than what they are.

Every man for himself, and God for us all.

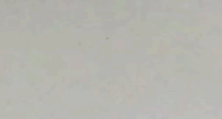


LEO TOLSTOY

1828-1910



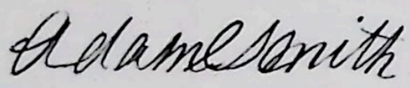
Reason unites us, not only with our contemporaries, but with men who lived two thousand years before us, and with those who will live after us.



GEORG FRIEDRICH HEGEL

1770-1831

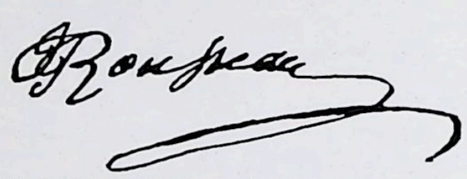
A man who has work that suits him and a wife whom he loves, has squared his accounts with life.



ADAM SMITH

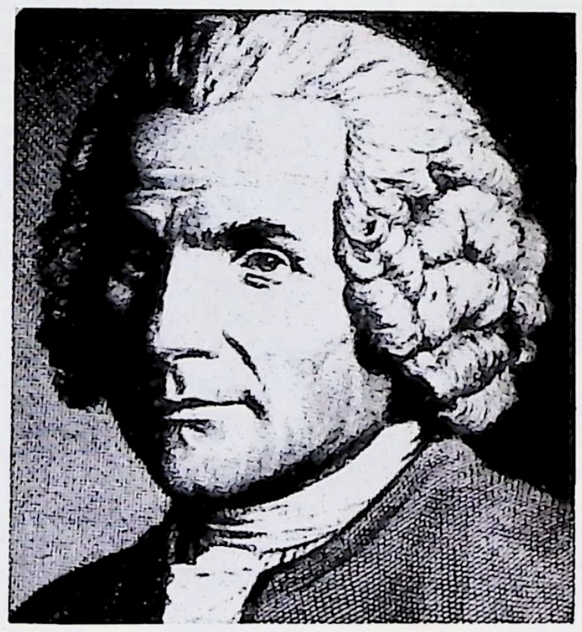
1723-1790

Never try to reason the prejudice out of a man. It was not reasoned into him and cannot be reasoned out.

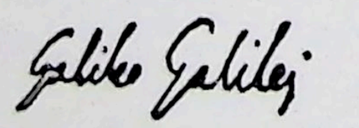


JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU

1712-1778

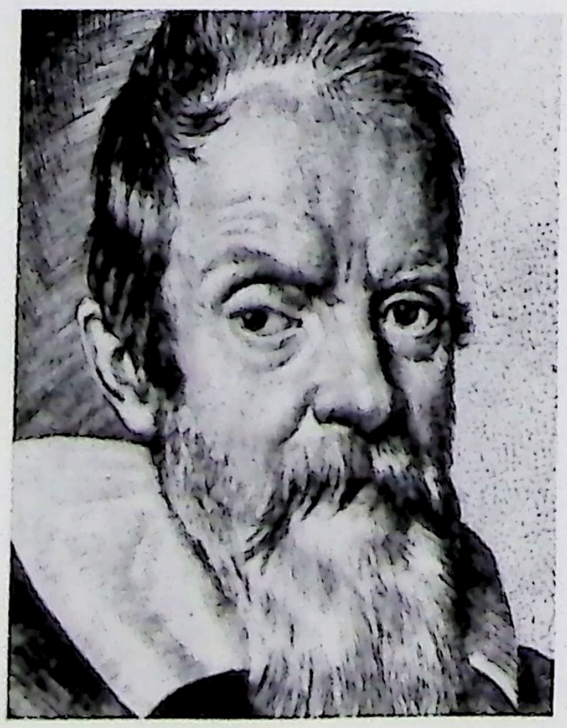


The moment past is no longer; the future may never be; the present is all of which man is the master.

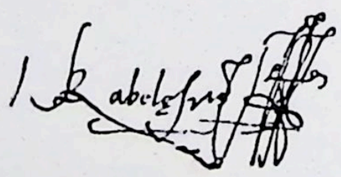


GALILEO GALILEI

1564-1642



You cannot teach a man anything; you can only help him to find it for himself.



FRANCOIS RABELAIS

1495-1553

Half the world does not know how the other half lives.

JOHANNES KEPLER

1571-1630

In theology we must consider the predominance of authority; in philosophy the predominance of reason.

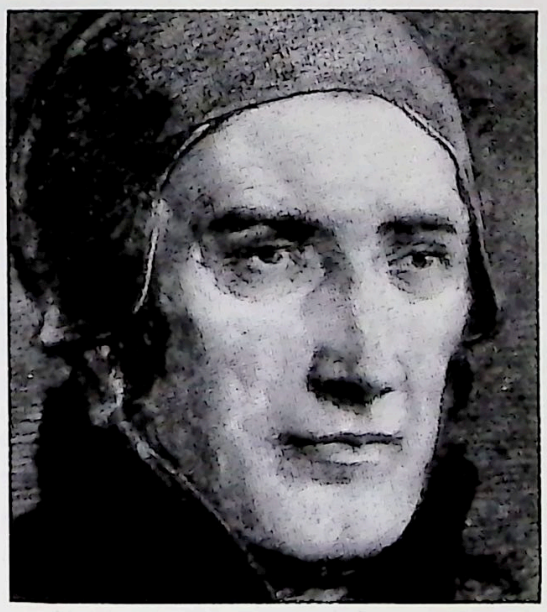
ANTOINE LAVOISIER

1743-1794

Who knows . . . if indeed the peace which the certainty of a happy and undisturbed old age will bring to everybody will not raise the average age of man and diminish mortality?

NICOLAUS COPERNICUS

1473-1543



To know the mighty works of God; to comprehend His wisdom and majesty and power; to appreciate, in degree, the wonderful working of His laws, surely all this must be a pleasing and acceptable mode of worship to the Most High, to Whom ignorance can not be more grateful than knowledge.

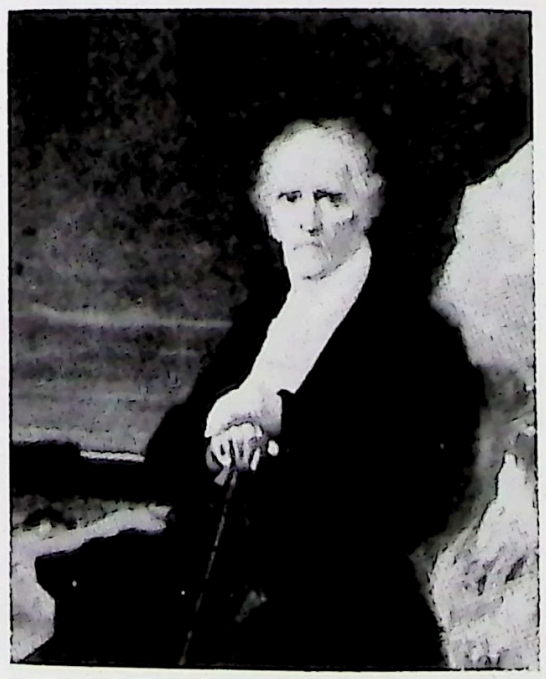
CHARLES DE MONTESQUIEU

1689-1755

If one only wished to be happy, this could be easily accomplished; but we wish to be happier than other people, and this is always difficult, for we believe others to be happier than they are.

JOSEPH FOURIER

1768-1830



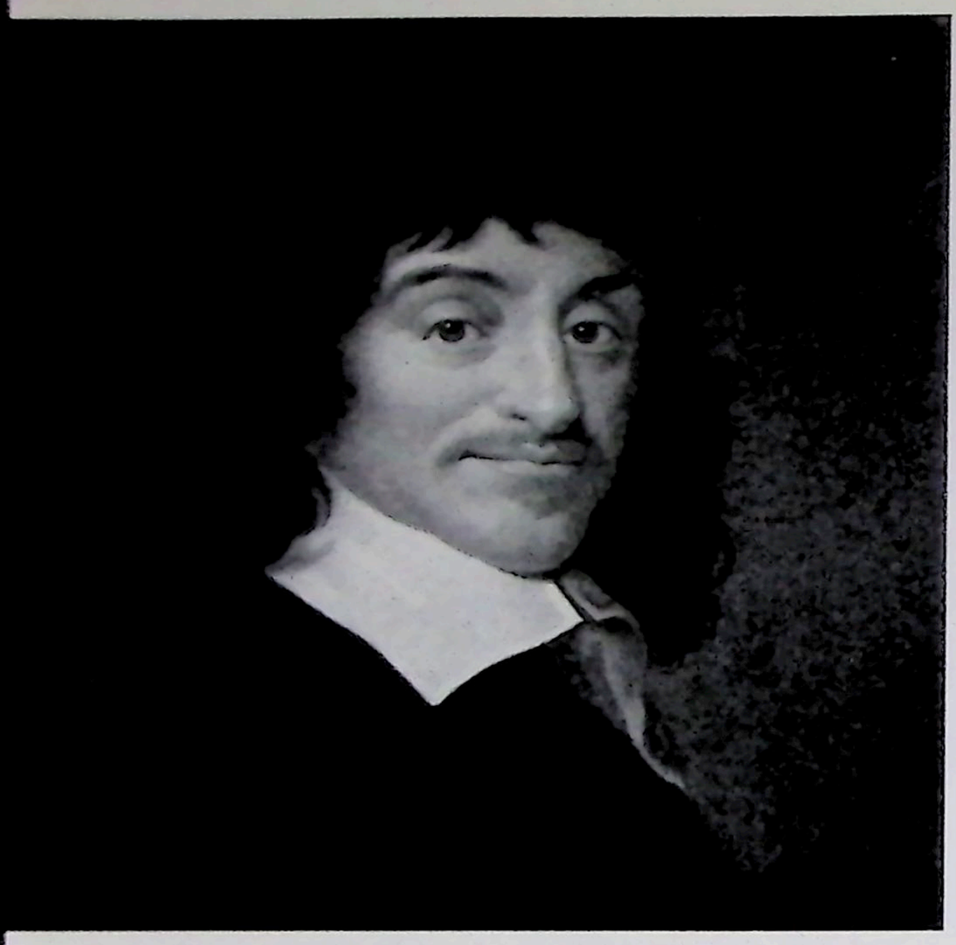
Work is the inevitable condition of human life.

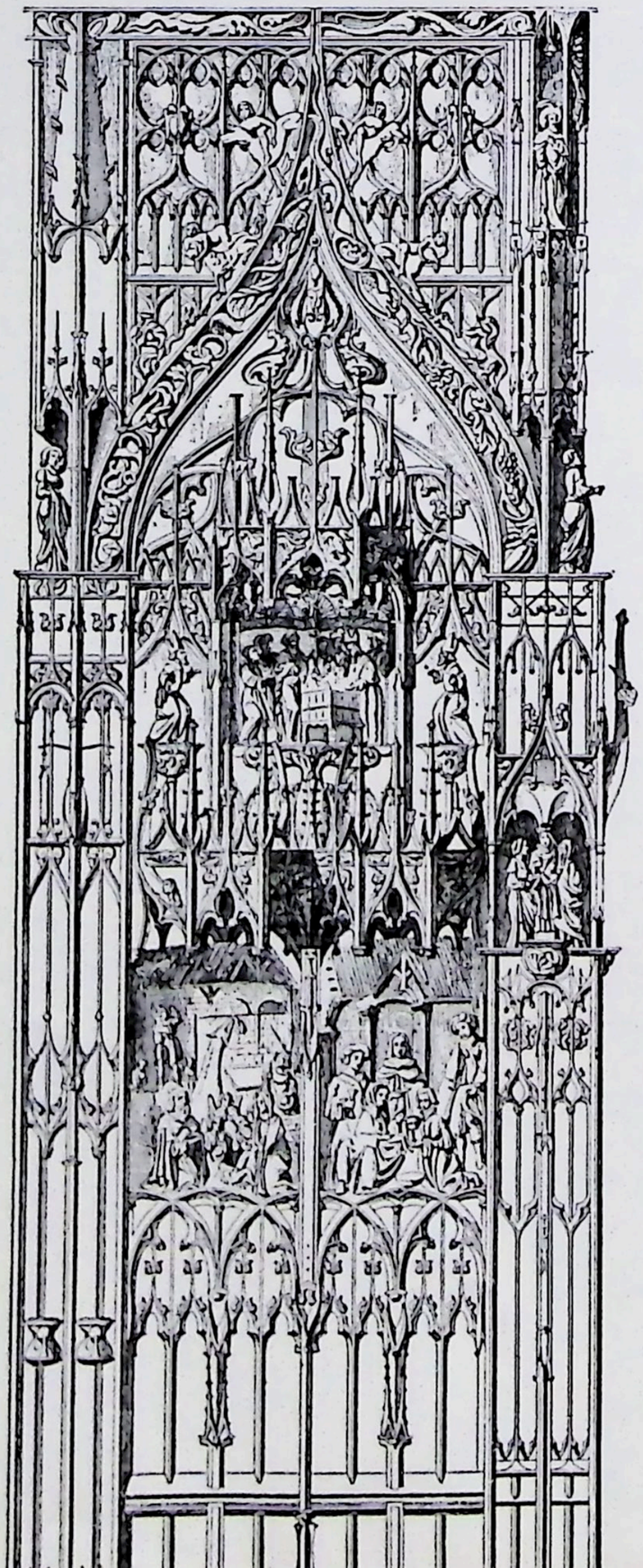
MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE

1533-1592

The lack of wealth is easily repaired, but the poverty of the soul is irreparable.

RENÉ DESCARTES





DESCARTES by birth belonged to the lesser nobility; both of his parents came from high legal families. He was born at La Haye, in Touraine, on March 31, 1596. Although a younger son, he derived an income, sufficient to make him independent throughout his life, from the property left him by his mother.

While still a boy Descartes was sent to the Jesuit School at La Fleche, founded by Henry IV and "one of the most celebrated schools in Europe." He appears to have been at La Fleche from 1606 to 1615, following the Jesuit program of studies which aimed at reconciling the classical learning of the Renaissance with the scholastic philosophy of the Middle Ages. Suffering from poor health, he was entrusted to the special care of Father Dinet, afterwards the confessor to Louis XIII and Louis XIV. He was excused from morning duties and allowed to stay in bed, a habit he retained to the end of his life. After completing the full curriculum of languages and humane letters, logic, ethics, mathematics, physics, and metaphysics, Descartes later declared, "I found myself embarrassed with so many doubts and errors, that it seemed to me that the effort to instruct myself had no effect other than the increasing discovery of my own ignorance. Mathematics alone appeared to be an exception "because of the certainty of its demonstrations and the evidence of its reasoning." He completed his education at the University of Poitiers, where he took his degree in law, November 10, 1616.

Descartes spent the remainder of his youth in traveling, "resolved no longer to seek any other science than the knowledge of myself, or of the great book of the world." Like many young Frenchmen of the time, he enlisted as a gentleman volunteer in the army of Prince Maurice of Nassau in Holland. He was still interested in mathematics, and at Breda became a friend of Isaac Beeckman, mathematician and rector of the college at Dort. Beeckman, after their meeting, noted in his diary, "Mathematical physicists are scarce, and I myself had never had any conversation on that topic with anybody but him." Their discussions, according to Descartes, turned his mind to purely theoretical porblems, and when he left Holland early in 1619 to seek more active military service in Germany, he had already completed an *Essay on Algebra* and a *Compendium on Music.*

Descartes dated his life as a philosopher from 1619. Early in that year, after his study of algebra and geometry had yielded what he considered an "entirely new science," he wrote to his Dutch friend: "My project is unbelievably ambitious, but I cannot help feeling that I am sighting I know not what light in the chaos of present-day geometry, and I trust that it will help me in dispelling that most opaque darkness." In the fall, after the army had gone into winter quarters, he retired to a village near Ulm on the Danube to devote himself to study and speculation. "On November 10, 1619," he wrote, "when I was filled with enthusiasm, I discovered the foundations of the wonderful science." The discovery was followed by a series of three dreams which left Descartes the impression that "the Spirit of Truth had opened to him the treasures of all the sciences."

The experience of November 10 did not immediately alter his way of life. Some time previously he had remarked, "As comedians put on a mask to hide their timidity, so I go forward masked preparing to mount the stage of the world, which up to now I have known only as a spectator"; and for the next nine

years he continued to live as a soldier and a "gentilhomme" while preparing to apply his newly discovered method to all knowledge. In 1622 he was back in France, frequenting the society of the leading scientists and philosophers. Through his friends and correspondence he was already known and esteemed for his scientific abilities, although he had not as yet published anything. He appears to have been reluctant to make his work public until his researches in physics promised to yield practical results, and he felt he could no longer "keep them concealed without greatly sinning against the law which obliges us to procure, as far as in us lies, the general good of all mankind." At the same time he had occasion to discuss his research with Cardinal Berulle, who was so impressed that he declared Descartes was morally obliged to make his thought known to the world. Feeling that he could not find in Paris the leisure and quiet he needed for writing, Descartes retired to Holland.

From 1629 until 1649 Descartes lived in Holland, leaving only for five short visits, three to France, one to England, and another to Denmark. He disliked dwelling for long in the same place and during that time changed his residence twenty-four times, concerned only, it would appear, to be in the neighborhood of a university and a Catholic church. Most of his more important works were written and published in Holland. He wrote the *Rules for the Direction of the Mind* during the first year, and by 1633 had all but completed his *Treatise on the World,* when the condemnation of Galileo caused him to abandon all thought of publishing it. In 1637 he brought out the *Discourse on Method* with the three "Essays" accompanying it, the *Dioptic, Meteors,* and *Geometry*. Through Mersenne, who acted as his personal secretary in Paris, he circulated a manuscript of his *Meditations* and obtained objections to its arguments; the work was published with his answers to the objections in 1641.

Descartes' philosophy became a source of controversy in Holland even before the appearance of his works, as a result of the teaching of his friends in the universities. Cartesianism was attacked as subversive of religion, and at one time Descartes was summoned before the magistrates of Utrecht, although the matter went no further because of the intervention of influential friends.

Among his friends and admirers was Princess Elizabeth, daughter of Emperor Frederick V, then in exile in Holland. Although she was only nineteen when the *Discourse* appeared, she was interested in philosophical discussion, and Descartes, in dedicating the *Principles of Philosophy* (1644) to her, declared that hers was "the only mind, as far as my experience goes, to which both metaphysics and mathematics are easy." Queen Christina of Sweden also became interested in the "new philosophy," and, through the French Ambassador, Descartes carried on a correspondence with her on ethical subjects, part of which was reworked and published as the *Treatise on the Passions of the Soul* (1650). Late in 1649 she persuaded Descartes to go to the Swedish court. He was charged with the task of drawing up a statute for a proposed academy of science and teaching philosophy to the Queen. The lessons in philosophy were scheduled to be given three times a week at five in the morning. Descartes contracted an inflammation of the lungs and died after a very brief illness, February 11, 1650.

FROM THE WISDOM OF DESCARTES

Good sense is of all things in the world the most equally distributed, for everybody thinks himself so abundantly provided with it, that even those most difficult to please in all other matters do not commonly desire more of it than they already possess.

In order to improve the mind, we ought less to learn than to contemplate.

I have made it my habit to alter my desires rather than the order of the world, and to consider that what has not come about is, so far as I was concerned, an absolute impossibility.

The chief cause of human errors is to be found in the prejudices picked up in childhood.

A vacuum is repugnant to reason.

The mind depends so greatly on temperament and on the disposition of the bodily organs that if it be possible to find a means of rendering men more generally wise and able than they now are, I believe it is through physiology that we must seek for it.

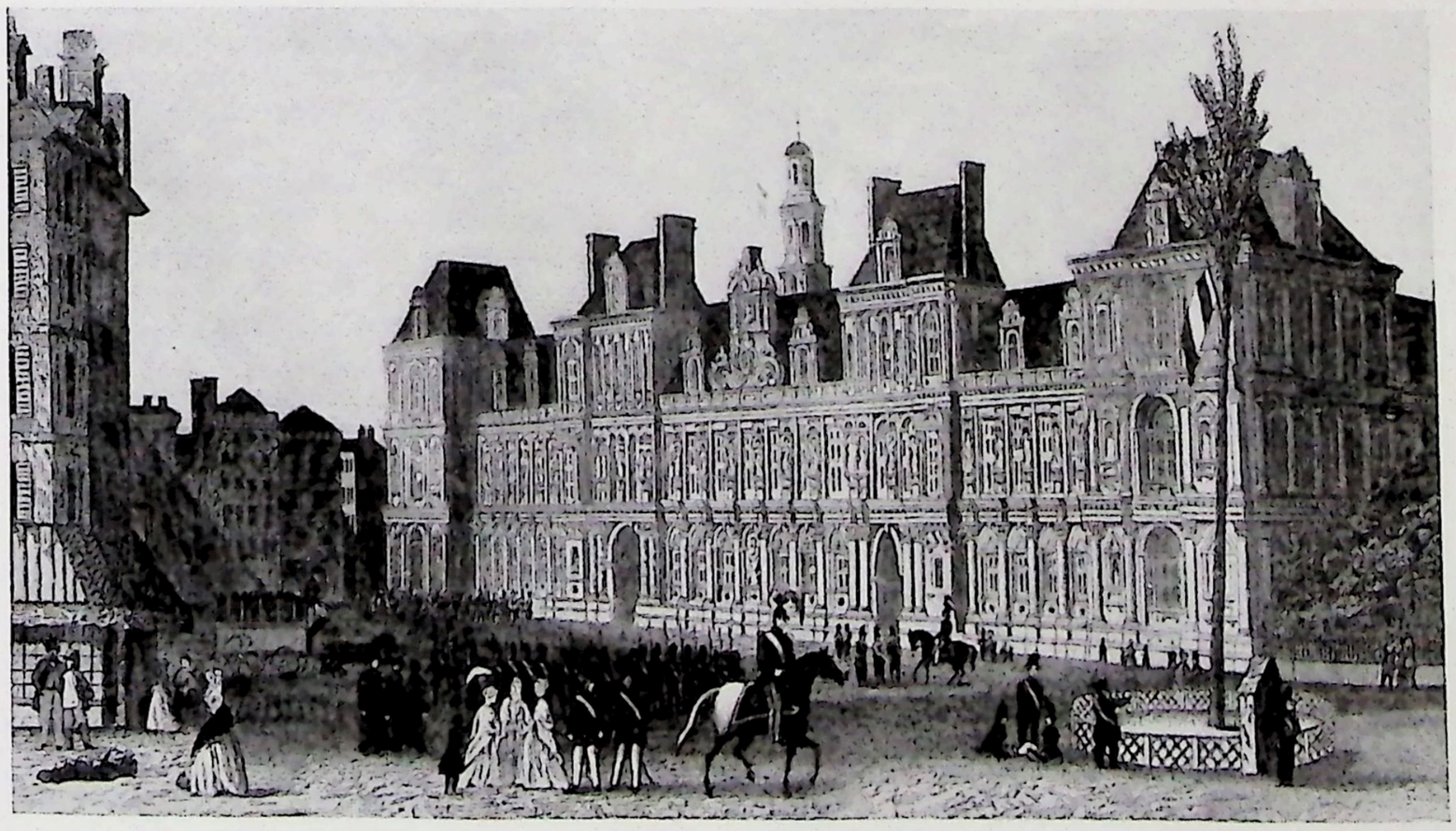
I think, therefore I am.

When any one has offended me, I try to raise my soul so high that the offense cannot reach it.

If you would be a real seeker after truth, it is necessary that at least once in your life you doubt, as far as possible, all things.

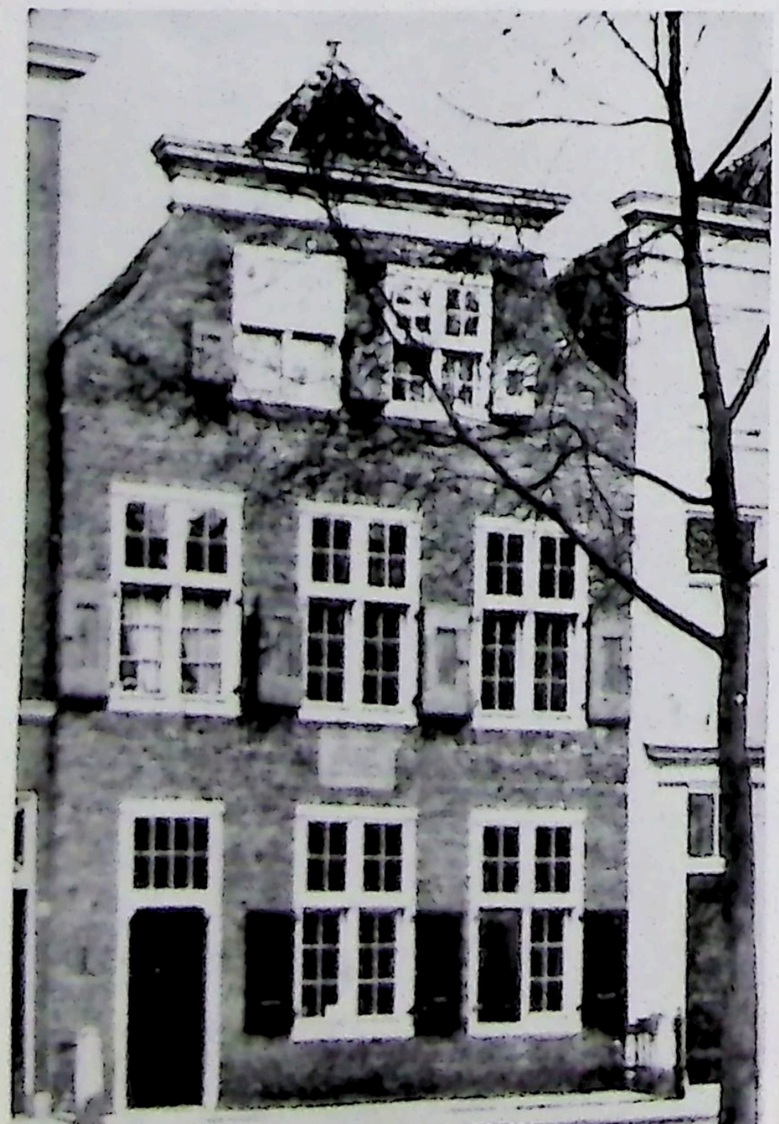
Common sense is the most widely shared commodity in the world, for every man is convinced that he is well supplied with it.

I perceived it to be possible to arrive at a knowledge highly useful in life; and, in place of the speculative philosophy usually taught in the schools, to discover a practical philosophy, by means of which—knowing the force and action of fire, water, air, the stars, the heavens and all the other bodies that surround us, as distinctly as we know the various crafts of our artisans—we might also apply them in the same way to all the uses to which they are adapted, and thus make ourselves the lords and possessors of nature.



The child Spinoza being instructed by his teacher, D'Acosta.

Spinoza lived in the attic of this house during the last years of his life.



BENEDICT DE SPINOZA

Benedict (Baruch) de Spinoza was born in Amsterdam on the 24th of November, 1632, the son of a Jewish family which had emigrated from Portugal in the last decade of the sixteenth century to have the benefit of Dutch religious toleration. His father seems to have been of some prominence in the local Jewish community, and young Baruch was presumably educated in the Jewish schools. Whatever may be the value of the various reports as to the course of his education, there can be no doubt that he early acquired unorthodox opinions, for in July, 1656, after some controversy, the details of which are far from clear, he was solemnly excommunicated by the Jewish authorities for "abominable heresies which he practises and teaches." Cut off from his own people, his parents dead, Spinoza was thrown on his own resources.

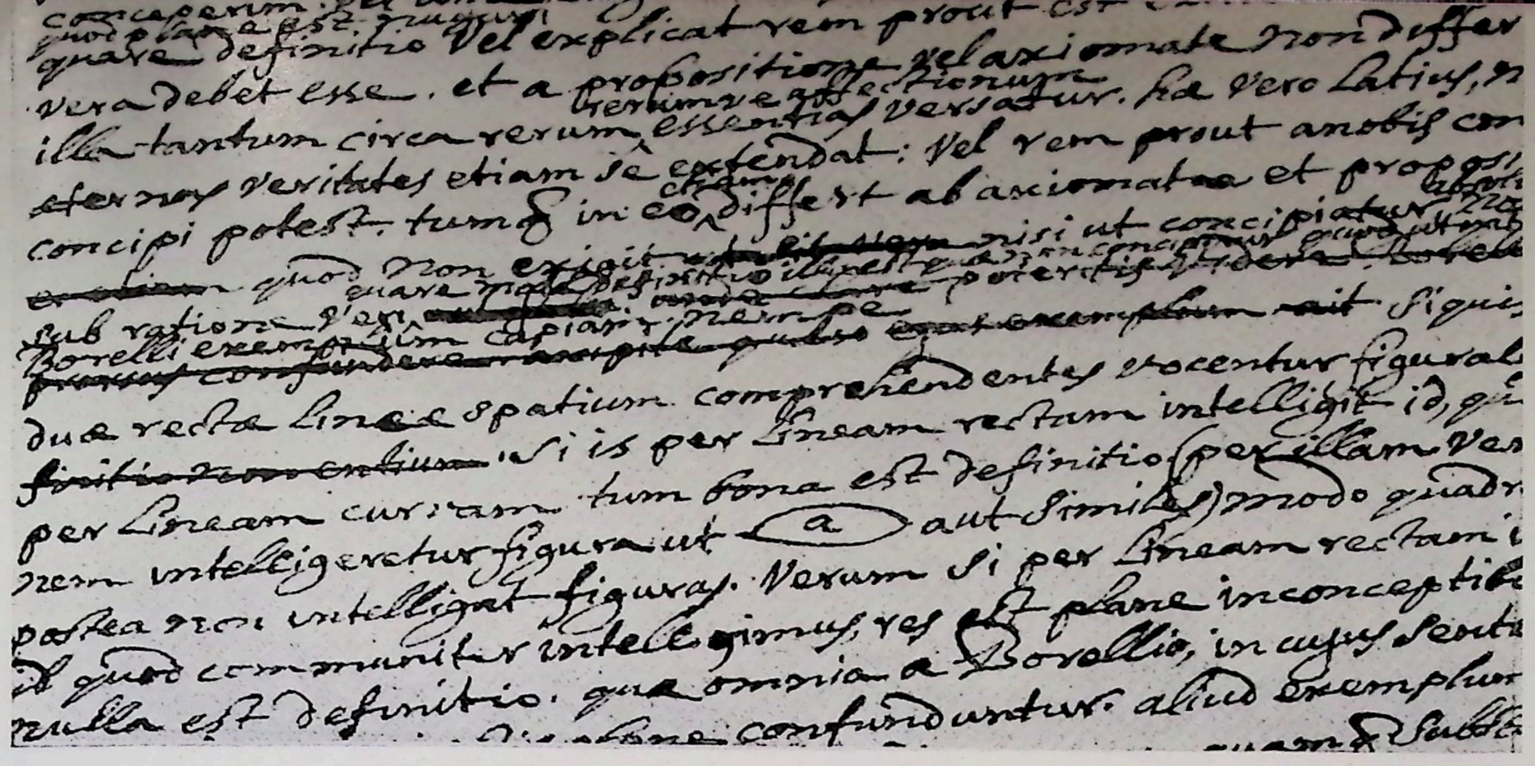
The next four years Spinoza spent in or near Amsterdam, associating with members of the Collegiant, Mennonite, and Remonstrant sects, and devoting himself to the study of Latin, Greek, and other "humane sciences." Probably it was also during these years that he acquired or at least perfected the trade of lens-grinder, which provided him with a means of support throughout the rest of his life. Leaving Amsterdam in 1660, he retired to Rijnsburg, a small village near Leyden and headquarters of the Collegiant group, where, according to his first biographer, "removed from all the obstacles which he could only overcome by flight, he devoted himself entirely to philosophy."

During his three years at Rijnsburg Spinoza wrote the *Short Treatise on God, Man and his Well-Being,* the *Treatise on the Improvement of the Understanding, Descartes' Principles of Philosophy Geometrically Demonstrated* with appended *Metaphysical Thoughts,* and seems to have begun work on what eventually became the *Ethics.* The exposition of Descartes' *Principles* was undertaken for the instruction of a group of students, who had formed a sort of philosophical club in Amsterdam, and it was far from representing Spinoza's own views, as, indeed, the preface to the published work stated. Spinoza allowed it to be published, however, hoping that "perhaps on this occasion there will be found some who hold the first places in my country, who will desire to see the other things which I have written and which I acknowledge as my own, and they will make it their business that I should be able to publish them without any risk of trouble."

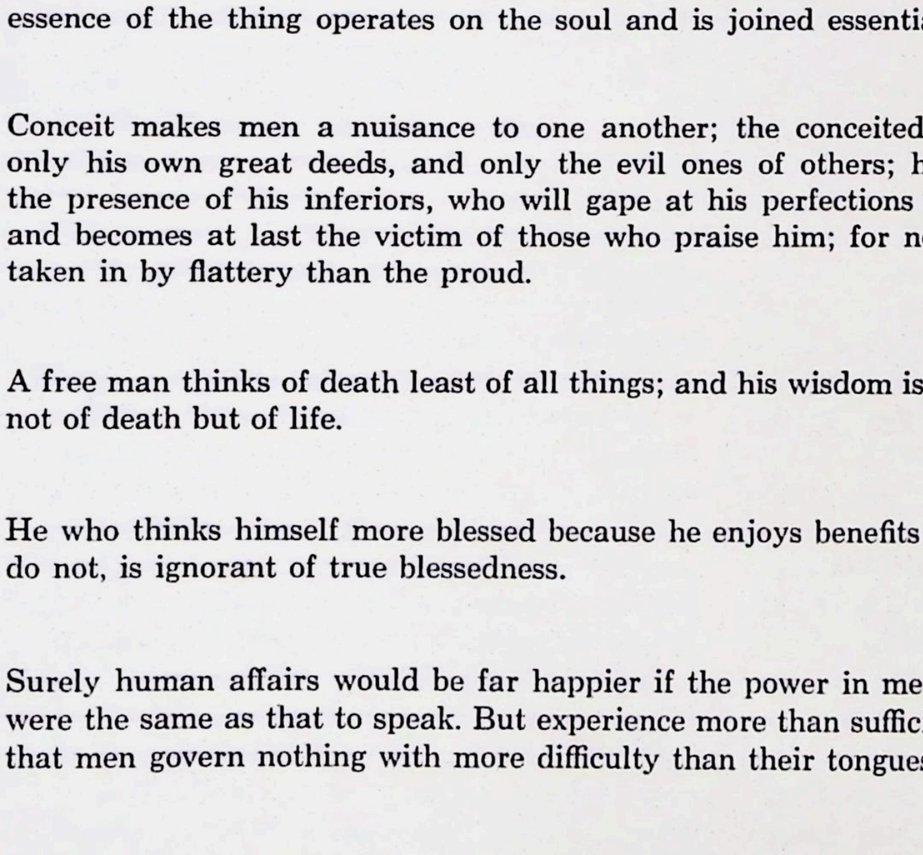
His reputation was already growing. He had been visited by and was corresponding with Henry Oldenburg, one of the first two secretaries of the Royal Society of London, and through him with Robert Boyle; through the years he became acquainted with numerous other prominent personages of both the political and intellectual worlds, among them Christiaan Huygens. Possibly in order to be closer to some of his friends, he moved to Voorburg, near The Hague, in 1663. Although the publication of his version of Descartes aroused considerable interest, it did not produce the consequences he had desired, since publication of his other works did not follow. While continuing to work on the *Ethics,* he began, in 1665, the composition of the *Theological-Political Treatise,* which was published anonymously in 1670. Spinoza was moved to write this book partly by a desire to assert "the liberty of philosophizing and of saying what we think," which "cannot be destroyed unless the peace and piety of the state is therewith also destroyed."

Condemnations of the *Treatise* immediately flew thick and fast, and in many Spinoza's name was mentioned. In the disorders consequent upon the French invasion of 1672, Jan de Witt, former Grand Pensionary of Holland and powerful friend and protector of Spinoza, was murdered by an angry mob. Spinoza, whose *Theological-Political Treatise* had been denounced as "forged in hell by a renegade Jew and the devil, and issued with the knowledge of Mr. Jan de Witt," was so aroused by this event that he was with difficulty restrained from public denunciation of the murderers. The Prince of Conde, commanding the French Army at Utrecht, invited Spinoza to visit him, and Spinoza went, but with what motives this visit was requested or why paid is far from certain. In any case the effort was wasted, for Conde had been called away, and Spinoza returned to The Hague, where he found himself an object of suspicion.

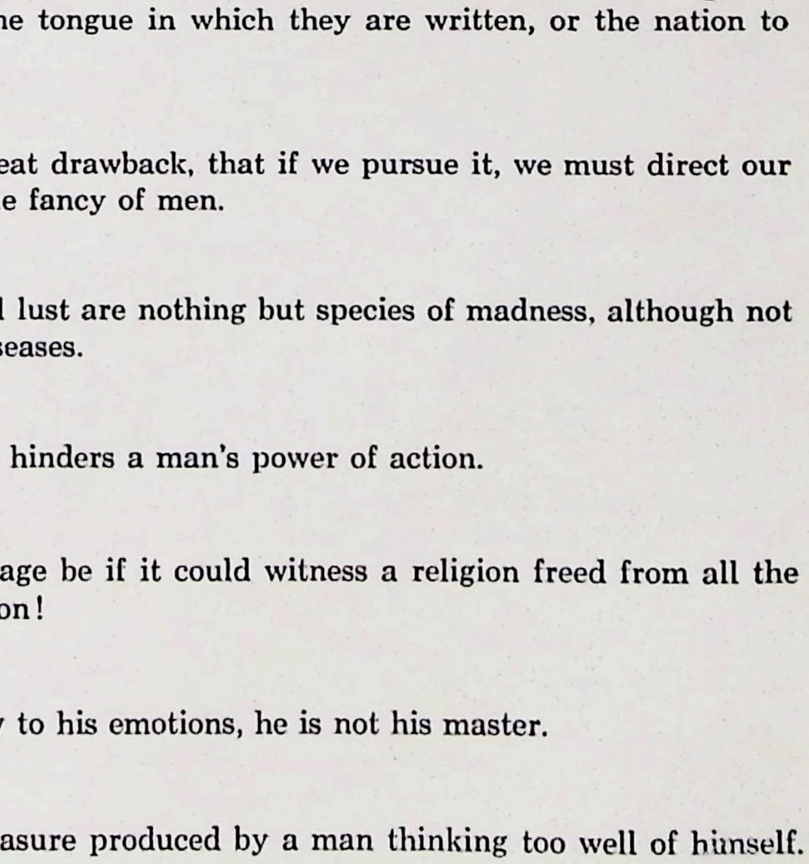
The remainder of his life was spent quietly at The Hague, where he had settled in 1670. He completed his *Ethics* and sought to publish it, but was discouraged by the complaints aroused by the mere rumor of its being on the press. Subsequently he began his *Political Treatise,* which remained unfinished, and planned a Hebrew grammar. In 1676, already seriously ill with the consumption which was to kill him, he received a visit from Leibnitz, with whom he had already corresponded on problems of optics, and they conversed "often and at great length." Four months later, on a quiet Sunday afternoon in February, 1677, while the "people of the house" were at church, he died in the presence of an Amsterdam physician-friend. His funeral was "attended by many illustrious personages and followed by six coaches." He was forty-four. He left a small library, his clothes, a little furniture, some finished lenses (which "sold pretty dear"), and his manuscripts, which were published the same year by his friends.



Portion of a letter written by Spinoza.



Spinoza's workroom. The instruments that he used for his work as a maker of lenses are on the table.



In this famous painting by Hirszenberg, the young Spinoza is shown reading aloud his critique of the Bible to his elders.

FROM THE WISDOM OF SPINOZA

Perfect truth is possible only with knowledge, and in knowledge the whole essence of the thing operates on the soul and is joined essentially to it.

Conceit makes men a nuisance to one another; the conceited man relates only his own great deeds, and only the evil ones of others; he delights in the presence of his inferiors, who will gape at his perfections and exploits; and becomes at last the victim of those who praise him; for none are more taken in by flattery than the proud.

A free man thinks of death least of all things; and his wisdom is a meditation not of death but of life.

He who thinks himself more blessed because he enjoys benefits which others do not, is ignorant of true blessedness.

Surely human affairs would be far happier if the power in men to be silent were the same as that to speak. But experience more than sufficiently teaches that men govern nothing with more difficulty than their tongues.

To be what we are, and to become what we are capable of becoming, is the only end of life.

So long as a man imagines that he cannot do this or that, so long is he determined not to do it: And consequently, so long it is impossible to him that he should do it.

Books which teach and speak of whatever is highest and best are equally sacred, whatever be the tongue in which they are written, or the nation to which they belong.

Fame has also this great drawback, that if we pursue it, we must direct our lives so as to please the fancy of men.

Avarice, ambition, and lust are nothing but species of madness, although not enumerated among diseases.

Sadness diminishes or hinders a man's power of action.

How blest would our age be if it could witness a religion freed from all the trammels of superstition!

When a man is a prey to his emotions, he is not his master.

Pride is a kind of pleasure produced by a man thinking too well of himself.

The more the mind knows, the better it understands its forces and the order of nature; the more it understands its forces or strength, the better it will be able to direct itself and lay down the rules for itself; and the more it understands the order of nature, the more easily it will be able to liberate itself from useless things.

SIR ISAAC NEWTON

NEWTON was born at Woolsthorpe, Lincolnshire, on Christmas Day, 1642. His father, a small farmer, died a few months before his birth, and when in 1645 his mother married the rector of North Witham, Newton was left with his maternal grandmother at Woolsthorse. After having acquired the rudiments of education at small schools close by, Newton was sent at the age of twelve to the grammar school at Grantham, where he lived in the house of an apothecary. By his own account, Newton was at first an indifferent scholar until a successful fight with another boy aroused a spirit of emulation and led to his becoming first in the school. He displayed very early a taste and aptitude for mechanical contrivances; he made windmills, water-clocks, kites, and sun-dials, and he is said to have invented a four-wheel carriage which was to be moved by the rider.

After the death of her second husband in 1656, Newton's mother returned to Woolsthorpe and removed her eldest son from school so that he might prepare himself to manage the farm. But it was soon evident that his interests were not in farming, and upon the advice of his uncle, the rector of Burton Coggles, he was sent to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he matriculated in 1661 as one of the boys who performed menial services in return for their expenses. Although there is no record of his formal progress as a student, Newton is known to have read widely in mathematics and mechanics. His first reading at Cambridge was in the optical works of Kepler. He turned to Euclid because he was bothered by his inability to comprehend certain diagrams in a book on astrology he had bought at a fair; finding its propositions self-evident, he put it aside as "a trifling book," until his teacher, Isaac Barrow, induced him to take up the book again. It appears to have been the study of Descartes' *Geometry* which inspired him to do original mathematical work. In a small commonplace book kept by Newton as an undergraduate, there are several articles on angular sections and the squaring of curves, several calculations about musical notes, geometrical problems from Vieta and Van Schooten, annotations out of Wallis' *Arithmetic of Infinities,* together with observations on refraction, on the grinding of spherical optic glasses, on the errors of lenses, and on the extraction of all kinds of roots. It was around the time of his taking the Bachelor's degree, in 1665, that Newton discovered the binomial theorem and made the first notes on his discovery of the "method of fluxions."

When the Great Plague spread from London to Cambridge in 1665, college was dismissed, and Newton retired to the farm in Lincolnshire, where he conducted experiments in optics and chemistry and continued his mathematical speculations. From this forced retirement in 1666 he dated his discovery of the gravitational theory: "In the same year I began to think of gravity extending to the orb of the Moon, . . . compared the force requisite to keep the Moon in her orb with the force of gravity at the surface of the earth and found them to answer pretty nearly." At about the same time his work on optics led to his explanation of the composition of white light.

On the re-opening of Trinity College in 1667, Newton was elected a fellow, and two years later, a little before his twenty-seventh birthday, he was appointed Lucasian professor of mathematics, succeeding his friend and teacher, Dr. Barrow. Newton had already built a reflecting telescope in 1668; the second telescope of his making he presented to the Royal Society in December, 1671. Two months later, as a fellow of the Society, he communicated his discovery on light and thereby started a controversy which was to run for many years and to involve Hooke, Lucas, Linus, and others. Newton, who always found controversy distasteful,"blamed my own imprudence for parting with so substantial a blessing as my quiet to run after a shadow." His papers on optics, the most important of which were communicated to the Royal Society between 1672 and 1676, were collected in the *Optics* (1704).

It was not until 1684 that Newton began to think of making known his work on gravity. Hooke, Halley, and Sir Christopher Wren had independently come to some notion of the law of gravity but were not having any success in explaining the orbits of the planets. In that year Halley consulted Newton on the problem and was astonished to find that he had already solved it. Newton submitted to him four theorems and seven problems, which proved to be the nucleus of his major work. In some seventeen or eighteen months during 1685 and 1686 he wrote in Latin the *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*. Newton thought for some time of suppressing the third book, and it was only Halley's insistence that preserved it. Halley also took upon himself the cost of publishing the work in 1687 after the Royal Society proved unable to meet its cost. The book caused great excitement throughout Europe.

While working upon the *Principles,* Newton had begun to take a more prominent part in university affairs. For his opposition to the attempt of James II to repudiate the oath of allegiance and supremacy at the university, Newton was elected parliamentary member for Cambridge. On his return to the university, he suffered a serious illness which incapacitated him for most of 1692 and 1693 and caused considerable concern to his friends and fellow workers. After his recovery, he left the university to work for the government. Through his friends Locke, Wren, and Lord Halifax, Newton was made Warden of the Mint in 1695 and four years later, Master of the Mint, a position he held until his death.

For the last thirty years of his life Newton produced little original mathematical work. He kept his interest and his skill in the subject; in 1696 he solved overnight a problem offered by Bernoulli in a competition for which six months had been allowed, and again in 1716 he worked in a few hours a problem which Leibnitz had proposed in order to "feel the pulse of the English analysts." He was much occupied, to his own distress, with two mathematical controversies, one regarding the astronomical observations of the astronomer royal, and the other with Leibnitz regarding the invention of calculus. He also worked on revisions for a second edition of the *Principles,* which appeared in 1713.

Newton's scientific work brought him great fame. He was a popular visitor at the Court and was knighted in 1705. Many honors came to him from the continent; he was in correspondence with all the leading men of science, and visitors became so frequent as to prove a serious discomfort. Despite his fame, Newton maintained his modesty.

From an early period of his life Newton had been much interested in theological studies and before 1690 had begun to study the prophecies. In that year he wrote, in the form of a letter to Locke, an *Historical Account of Two Notable Corruptions of the Scriptures,* regarding two passages on the Trinity. He left in manuscript *Observations on the Prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse* and other works of exegesis.

After 1725 Newton's health was much impaired, and his duties at the Mint were discharged by a deputy. In February, 1727, he presided for the last time at the Royal Society, of which he had been president since 1703, and died on March 20, 1727, in his eighty-fifth year. He was buried in Westminster Abbey after lying in state in the Jerusalem Chamber.

FROM THE WISDOM OF NEWTON

I do not know what I may appear to the world; but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the seashore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, while the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me.

The instinct of brutes and insects can be the effect of nothing else than the wisdom and skill of a powerful ever-living agent.

No sciences are better attested than the religion of the Bible.

Philosophy is such an impertinently litigious lady that a man had as good be engaged in lawsuits as to have to do with her.

If you are affronted it is better to pass it by in silence, or with a jest, though with some dishonor, than to endeavor revenge.

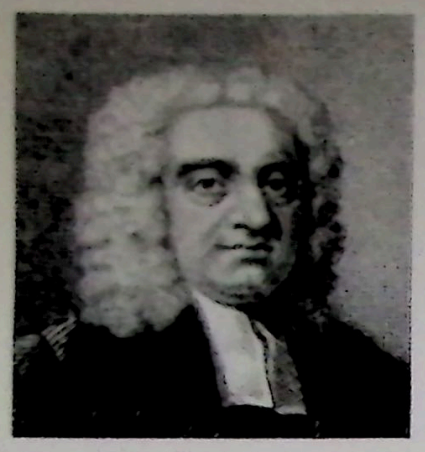
If you can keep reason above passion, that and watchfulness will be your best defenders.

If I have ever made any valuable discoveries, it has been owing more to patient attention than to any other talent.

We account the Scriptures of God to be the most sublime philosophy.

Geometry is that part of universal mechanics which accurately proposes and demonstrates the art of measuring.

If I have done the public any service, it is due to patient thought.

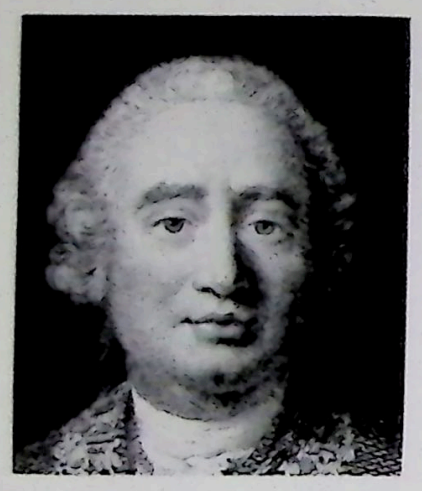


Jonat: Swift.

JONATHAN SWIFT

1667-1745

A wise man is never less alone than when he is alone.



David Hume

DAVID HUME

1711-1776

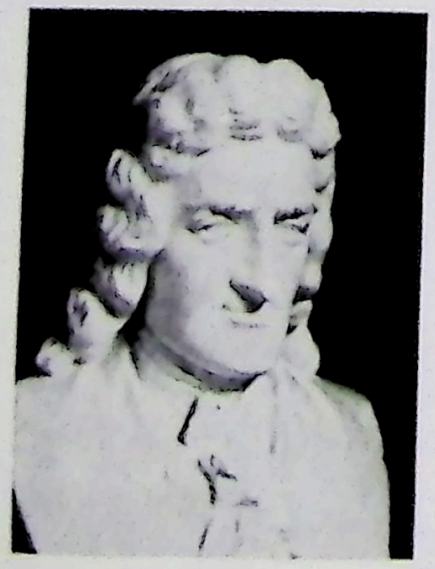
Beauty in things exists in the mind which contemplates them.

L. Sterne

LAURENCE STERNE

1713-1768

I fear nothing but doing wrong.

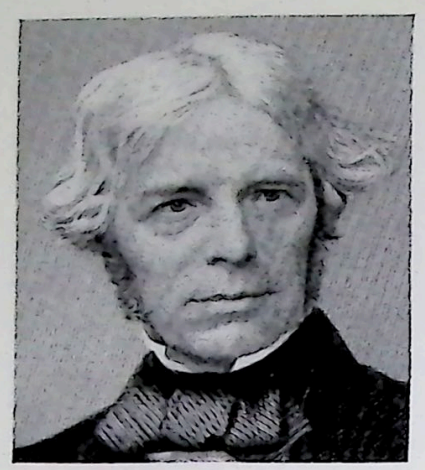


Hen: Fielding

HENRY FIELDING

1707-1754

Make money your God, and it will plague you like the devil.

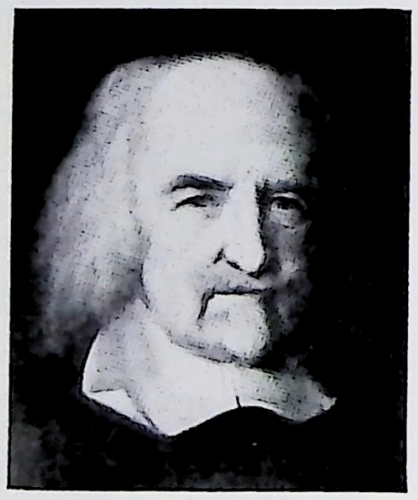


M. Faraday. Lon:

MICHAEL FARADAY

1791-1867

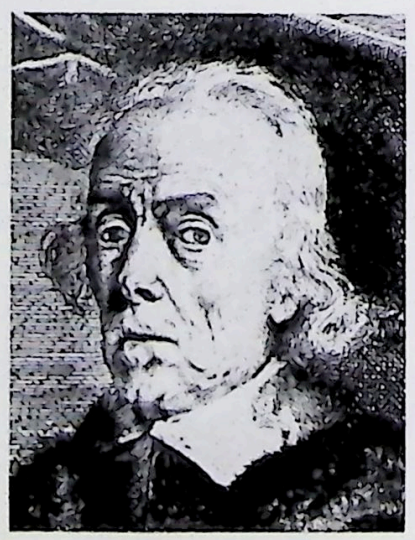
The important thing is to know how to take all things quietly.



THOMAS HOBBES

1588-1679

Faith is a gift of God which man can neither give nor take away by promise of rewards or menaces of torture.



WILLIAM HARVEY

1578-1657

Much better is it oftentimes to grow wise at home and in private, than by publishing what you have amassed with infinite labor, to stir up tempests that may rob you of peace and quiet for the rest of your days.

George Berkeley

GEORGE BERKELEY

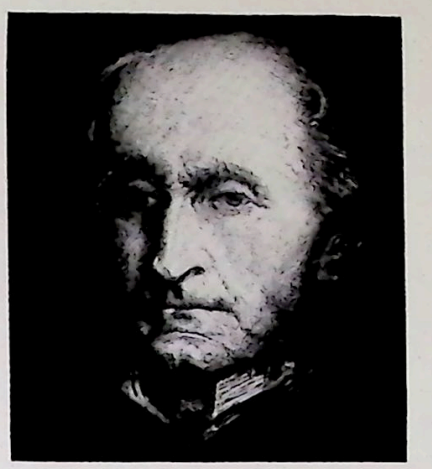
1685-1753

He who says there is no such thing as an honest man, you may be sure is himself a knave.

J. S. Mill

JOHN STUART MILL

1806-1873

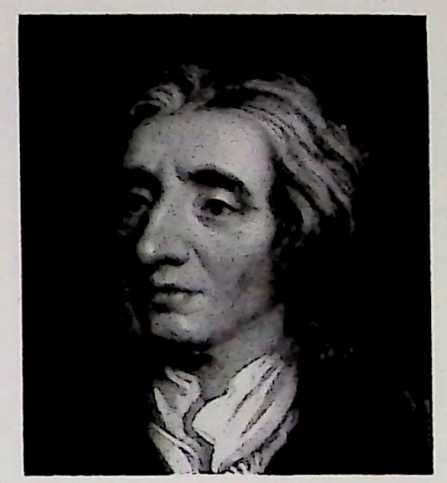


A cultivated mind is one to which the fountains of knowledge have been opened, and which has been taught, in any tolerable degree, to exercise its faculties.

John Locke

JOHN LOCKE

1632-1704



Reading furnishes the mind only with materials of knowledge; it is thinking makes what we read ours. So far as we apprehend and see the connection of ideas, so far it is ours; without that it is so much loose matter floating in our brain.

Wm. James

WILLIAM JAMES

1842-1910

Be not afraid of life. Believe that life is worth living, and your belief will help create the fact.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

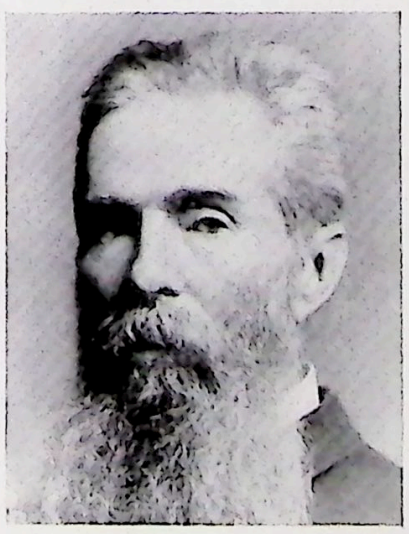
1340-1400

My mind to me a kingdom is; such present joys therein I find, that it excels all other bliss that earth affords.

Herman Melville

HERMAN MELVILLE

1819-1891

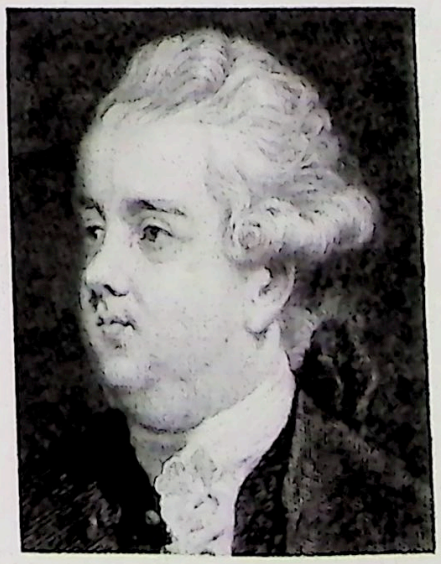


We cannot live only for ourselves. A thousand fibres connect us with our fellow-men; and along those fibers, as sympathetic threads, our actions run as causes, and they come back to us as effects.

E. Gibbon

EDWARD GIBBON

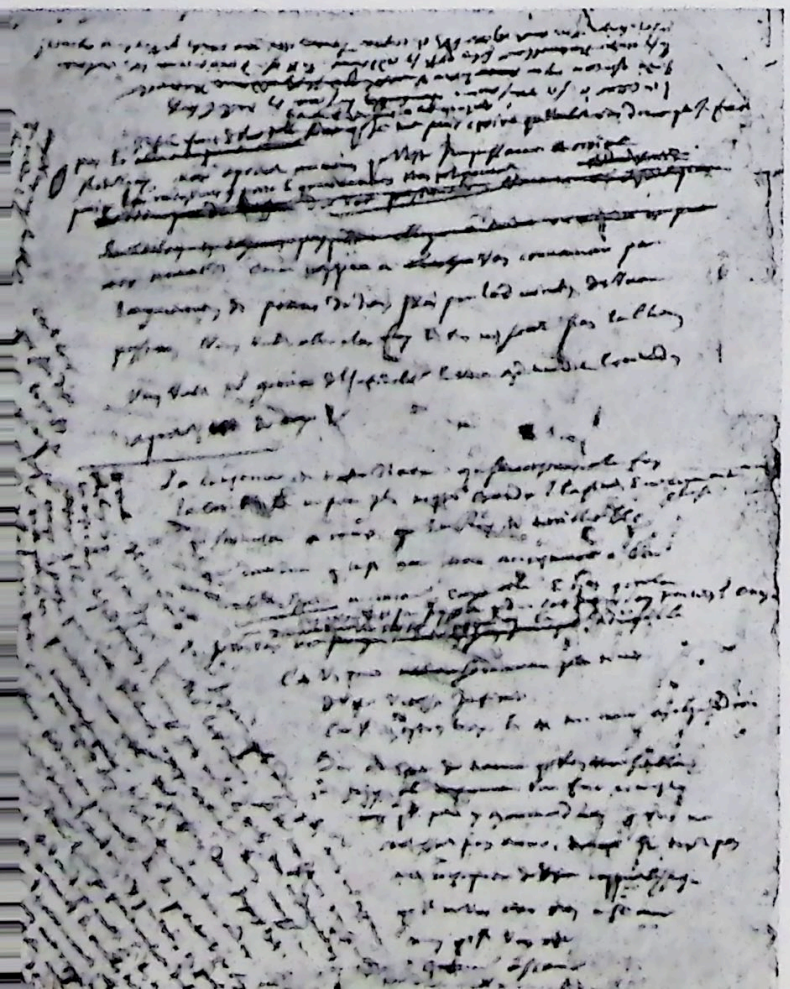
1737-1794



Conversation enriches the understanding, but solitude is the school of genius.

BLAISE PASCAL

Manuscript page of Pascal's "Pensees."



PASCAL was born at Clermont Ferrand in Auvergne, June 19, 1623. His father, Etienne Pascal, had been trained as a lawyer in Paris and held the post of President of the Court of Aids at Clermont. His mother, the pious Antoinette Began, died in 1626, leaving her husband to care for Gilberte, Blaise, and the baby, Jacqueline.

In 1631 Etienne Pascal sold his post, moved to Paris, and set about the education of his son. His method, according to Gilberte, "was to keep the child always in advance of his work." The boy was first to learn to think for himself, stimulated by the observations, questions, and conversation of his father. Later, after he had mastered Greek and Latin, he was to be allowed to study geometry. But at the age of twelve the boy began geometry by himself and is supposed to have achieved the equivalent of Euclid's first thirty-two theorems before his father noticed his precocity.

The elder Pascal always associated with men of eminence in science and the arts, and in his company the young Pascal was introduced to Father Mersenne's circle and became acquainted with Desargues, Fermat, and Roberval. Following a geometrical method of Desargues, Pascal completed before he was sixteen a work on conic sections that was widely circulated, though never published, which, according to his own account, embraced the work of Apollonius. Though his health was seriously affected by the intensity of his intellectual work, a few years later he achieved a still greater reputation by his invention of the first calculating machine.

Although the Pascal family had been regular and respectful in their religious practice, religion was not especially important in their lives until 1646 when they became acquainted with Jansenism. Pascal, then only twenty-three, had his attention directed to religious and theological questions, and he seems to have been influential in converting his whole family to the Jansenist version of Catholicism. His sister, Jacqueline, decided to renounce the world, and on the death of her father in 1651 she entered the Jansenist convent of Port Royal.

Pascal himself continued his scientific and mathematical researches. The same year that he began to think about Jansenism he performed his variations on Torricelli's experiment, which resulted in his *New Experiments concerning the Vacuum* (1647). This in turn led to his investigation of the action of fluids under pressure of air which established his reputation as one of the founders of hydrodynamics. By 1651 he had apparently completed most of the work for his *Great Experiment concerning the Equilibrium of Fluids,* although it was not published until 1663. Upon the death of his father, he laid aside to some extent his scientific researches, frequented polite society with his friends, the young Duc de Roannez and the Chevalier de Mere, shared their interests, and read Epictetus and Montaigne. Puzzling over a problem posed by de Mere concerning the division of stakes in a game of chance, he began to investigate the theory of probability. His results appeared in 1654 in the correspondence with Fermat and in the *Treatise on the Arithmetical Triangle.*

By 1654 Pascal felt "an extreme aversion for the beguilements of the world." The contrast between his life and that of Jacqueline, whom he visited the same year at Port Royal, intensified his dissatisfaction. His growing decision to retire from the world was confirmed on November 23, 1654, when he experienced his "second conversion."

Pascal's talents were soon employed by the Jansenists. In 1655 Antoine Arnauld, the official theologian of Port Royal, was condemned by the Sorbonne, and it was considered expedient to enlist public opinion for the Jansenists against their Jesuit adversaries. Perhaps at the suggestion of Arnauld himself, Pascal began his *Provincial Letters,* which, from January, 1656 to April, 1657, captivated Paris by their style as well as their polemic. He was also asked to work upon a manual of geometry for use in the Port Royal schools, and it is probably in connection with this that he wrote his essay *On Geometrical Demonstration.*

Afflicted with ill-health since infancy, Pascal's suffering had become so acute in 1658 that any sustained effort became increasingly difficult. In one attempt to distract his mind from a persistent toothache, he turned to the problem of the Cycloid, which had occupied his friend, Roberval, as well as many other mathematicians of the time. Before publishing his results, he proposed his theorems for public competition. Wallis and Lalouere among others accepted the challenge, but only Pascal was able to provide the complete solution.

Although he considered geometry the highest exercise of the mind, as he wrote Fermat, "it is only a trade,...and I am steeped in studies so far from that mentality, that scarcely do I remember that there is any such." After the cure of his niece at Port Royal in 1656, which was known as the Miracle of the Holy Thorn, Pascal began reading and collecting material for what he planned to be an *Apology for the Christian Religion.* He put down his thoughts "upon the first scrap of paper that came to hand ...a few words and very often parts of words only." These fragments, found after his death, compose what has come to be known as his *Pensees.*

As death approached, Pascal's life became more austere. He gave his possessions to the poor and continually strove for complete detachment from those he loved. "It is unjust that anyone should attach himself to me... for I am not an end and aim of anyone," he wrote on a paper he kept always about him to fix his resolve. In June, 1662, he gave shelter to a poor family which developed smallpox. Rather than dispossess them, he moved to the house of Gilberte, where he was seized with a violent illness which lingered for two months. He died August 19, at the age of thirty-nine.

FROM THE WISDOM OF PASCAL

Let any man examine his thoughts, and he will find them ever occupied with the past or the future. We scarcely think at all of the present; or if we do, it is only to borrow the light which it gives for regulating the future. The present is never our object; the past and the present we use as means; the future only is our end. Thus, we never live, we only hope to live.

By space the universe embraces me and swallows me up like an atom, by thought I embrace the universe.

Man is so made that by continually telling him he is a fool he believes it, and by continually telling it to himself he makes himself believe it. For man holds an inward talk with himself alone, which it behooves him to regulate well.

Amusement that is excessive and followed only for its own sake, allures and deceives us, and leads us down imperceptibly in thoughtlessness to the grave.

Do you wish people to speak well of you? Then do not speak at all yourself.

If a man loves a woman for her beauty, does he love her? No; for the small-pox, which destroys her beauty without killing her, causes his love to cease. And if any one loves me for my judgment or my memory, does he really love me? No; for I can lose these qualities without ceasing to be.

It is not good to be too free. It is not good to have everything one wants.

Eloquence is the art of saying things in such a way that those to whom we speak may listen to them with pleasure.

Even those who write against fame wish for the fame of having written well, and those who read their works desire the fame of having read them.

It is of dangerous consequence to represent to man how near he is to the level of beasts, without showing him at the same time his greatness. It is likewise dangerous to let him see his greatness without his meanness. It is more dangerous yet to leave him ignorant of either; but very beneficial that he should be made sensible of both.

A slanderer cannot succeed unless he has a reputation for hating slander.

Curiosity is only vanity. Most frequently we wish not to know, but to talk. We would not take a sea voyage for the sole pleasure of seeing without hope of ever telling.

It is much better to know something about everything than to know everything about one thing.

In proportion as our own mind is enlarged we discover a greater number of men of originality. Commonplace people see no difference between one man and another.

Man's deepest abasement is his pursuit of glory; but it is likewise the greatest mark of his excellence, for, whatever possessions he may have, whatever health and essential comfort, he is not content unless he have the esteem of his fellows.

Although persons may have no interest in what they are saying, we must not conclude absolutely that they are not lying; for there are people who lie simply for the sake of lying.

Happiness is neither within us only, or without us; it is the union of ourselves with God.

He that takes truth for his guide, and duty for his end, may safely trust to God's providence to lead him aright.

Our senses can grasp nothing that is extreme. Too much noise deafens us; too much light blinds us; too far or too near prevents us seeing; too long or too short is beyond understanding; too much truth stuns us.

Men never do evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it from religious conviction.

Vanity is so anchored in the heart of man that a soldier, cook, street porter, vapor and wish to have their admirers; and philosophers even wish the same. Those who write against it wish to have the glory of having written well; and those who read it wish to have the glory of having read well; and I, who write this, have perhaps this desire; and perhaps those who will read this.

If all men knew what each said of the other, there would not be four friends in the world.

Man is so wretched that he could be bored even without any cause of boredom, thanks to his natural constitution; and he is so futile that, although full of countless essential causes of boredom, the most trifling thing, such as a billiard table and a ball to push, is enough to amuse him.

Imagination disposes of everything; it creates beauty, justice, happiness, which is everything in this world.

Man's chief disease is curiosity about things he cannot know.

When we are too young our judgment is weak; when we are too old, ditto.

Men, not having been able to cure death, misery, and ignorance, have imagined to make themselves happy by not thinking of these things.

All men have happiness as their object: There is no exception. However different the means they employ, they all aim at the same end.

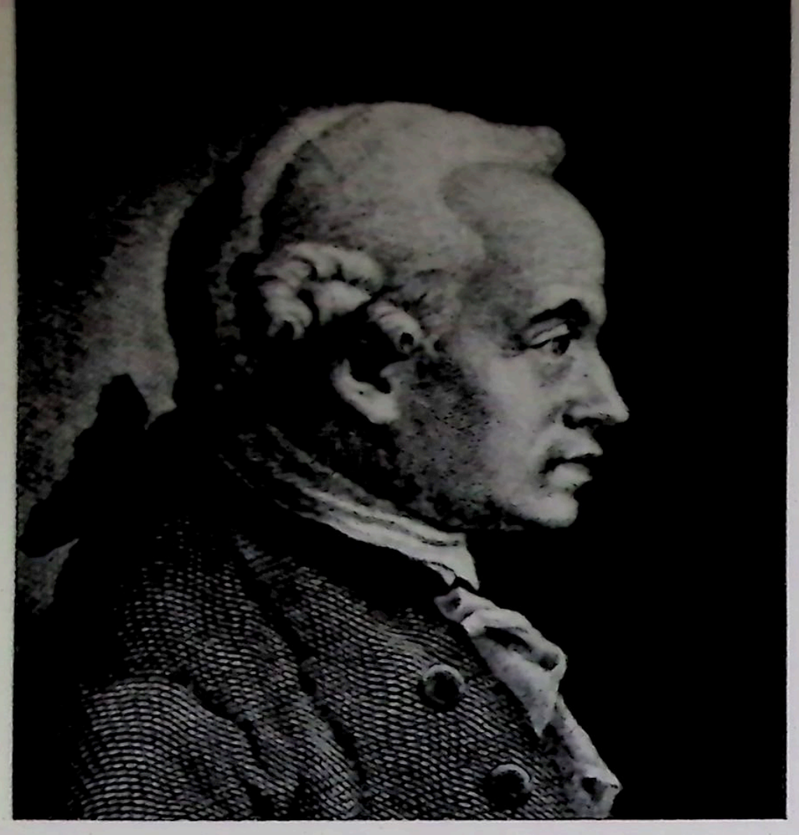
Time cures sorrows and squabbles because we all change, and are no longer the same persons. Neither the offender nor the offended is the same.

To pity the unhappy is not contrary to selfish desire; on the other hand, we are glad of the occasion to thus testify friendship, and attract to ourselves the reputation of tenderness, without giving anything.

Man is not worthy of God; but he is not incapable of being made worthy.

Man's greatness lies in his power of thought.

Kind words produce their own image in men's souls; and a beautiful image it is. They soothe and quiet and comfort the hearer. They shame him out of his sour, morose, unkind feelings. We have not yet begun to use kind words in such abundance as they ought to be used.



IMMANUEL KANT

KANT was born at Konigsberg in East Prussia on April 22, 1724. His father, a saddler in the city, was descended from a Scottish immigrant; his mother was German. Both parents were devoted followers of the Pietist branch of the Lutheran Church, and it was largely through the influence of their pastor that Kant, who was the fourth of eleven children but the eldest surviving son, obtained an education.

In his eighth year Kant entered the Collegium Fredericianum, which his pastor directed. It was a "Latin School," and during the eight and a half years that he was there, Kant acquired a love for the Latin classics, especially for Lucretius. In 1740 he enrolled in the University of Konigsberg as a theological student. Though he attended courses in theology, and even preached on one or two occasions, he was principally attracted to mathematics and physics. Given access to the library of his professor in these subjects, he read Newton and Leibnitz and in 1744 started his first book, dealing with the problem of kinetic forces. By that time he had decided to pursue an academic career, but on failing to obtain the post of under-tutor in one of the schools attached to the university, he was compelled for financial reasons to withdrew and seek a position as a tutor.

During the nine years that Kant was a tutor (1746-1755), he was employed by three different families. In this position he was introduced to the influential society of the city, acquired social grace, and made his farthest travels from his native city, which took him to Arnsdorf, about sixty miles from Konigsberg. In 1755, aided by a relative, he was able to complete his degree at the university and assume the role of *Privat-docent,* or lecturer. The three dissertations he presented for this post dealt respectively with fire, the first principles of metaphysical knowldge, and "the advantages to natural philosophy of a metaphysic connected with geometry." With the opening of the winter term he began his lectures. At first he restricted himself to mathematics and physics, and that year and the next he published several scientific works, dealing with the different races of men, the nature of winds, the causes of earthquakes, and the general theory of the heavens. But he soon branched into other subjects, including logic, metaphysics, and moral philosophy. He even lectured on fireworks and fortifications, and gave every summer for thirty years a popular course on physical geography.

During his fifteen years as a *Privat-docent,* Kant's fame as writer and lecturer steadily increased. Though he failed twice to obtain a professorship at Konigsberg, he continued to refuse appointments elsewhere. The only academic preferment he received during this lengthy probation was the post of under-librarian, which he was given in 1766. Finally in 1770 he obtained the chair of logic and metaphysics.

Kant's inaugural dissertation as professor, *On the Form and Principles of the Sensible and Intelligible World,* indicated the direction of his philosophical interests. In submitting it to a friend that same year, he wrote: "For about a year I flatter myself that I have attained that conception which I have no fear that I shall ever change, though I may expand it, by means of which all kinds of metaphysical questions can be tested according to sure and easy criteria, and by means of which it can be decided with certainty how far their solution is possible." But it was not until 1781 that the *Critique of Pure Reason* appeared, although he declared that the actual writing took but four or five months. In the same letter he also noted his intention to investigate "pure moral philosophy" and to systematize his metaphysics of morals, which was first accomplished in 1785 with the publication of the *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic of Morals.* The *Critique of Practical Reason* was brought out in 1788 and the *Critique of Judgement* two years later.

The "critical philosophy" was soon being taught in every important German-speaking university, and young men flocked to Konigsberg as a shrine of philosophy. In some cases the Prussian Government even undertook the expense of their support. Kant came to be consulted as an oracle on all kinds of questions, including such subjects as the lawfulness of vaccination. Such homage did not interrupt Kant's regular habits. Scarcely five feet tall, with a deformed chest, and suffering from weak health, he maintained throughout his life a severe regimen. It was arranged with such regularity that people set their clocks according to his daily walk along the street named for him the Philosopher's Walk. Until old age prevented him, he is said to have missed his regular appearance only on the occasion when Rousseu's Emile so engrossed him that for days he stayed at home.

As early as 1789 Kant's health began to decline seriously. He still had many literary projects, but found it impossible to write more than a few hours a day. In 1792 with the appearance of his work, *On Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone,* he became involved in a dispute with the Prussian authorities on the right to express religious opinions, and at the request of the government he remained silent for some years on the subject. In 1795 he published his treatise on *Perpetual Peace.* In 1797, after a career of forty-two years, he delivered his last lecture and retired from the university. The following year, by way of asserting his right to resume theological discussions, he wrote on the conflict of the faculties in the university. This proved to be Kant's last book; the large work, at which he labored until his death, on the connection between physics and metaphysics, was found to be only a repetition of his already published works. After a gradual decline, which was painful to himself and his friends, he died February 12, 1804.

Königsberg
31. Dec.
1789

ganz der Ihrig
I. Kant

Part of a letter written by Kant.

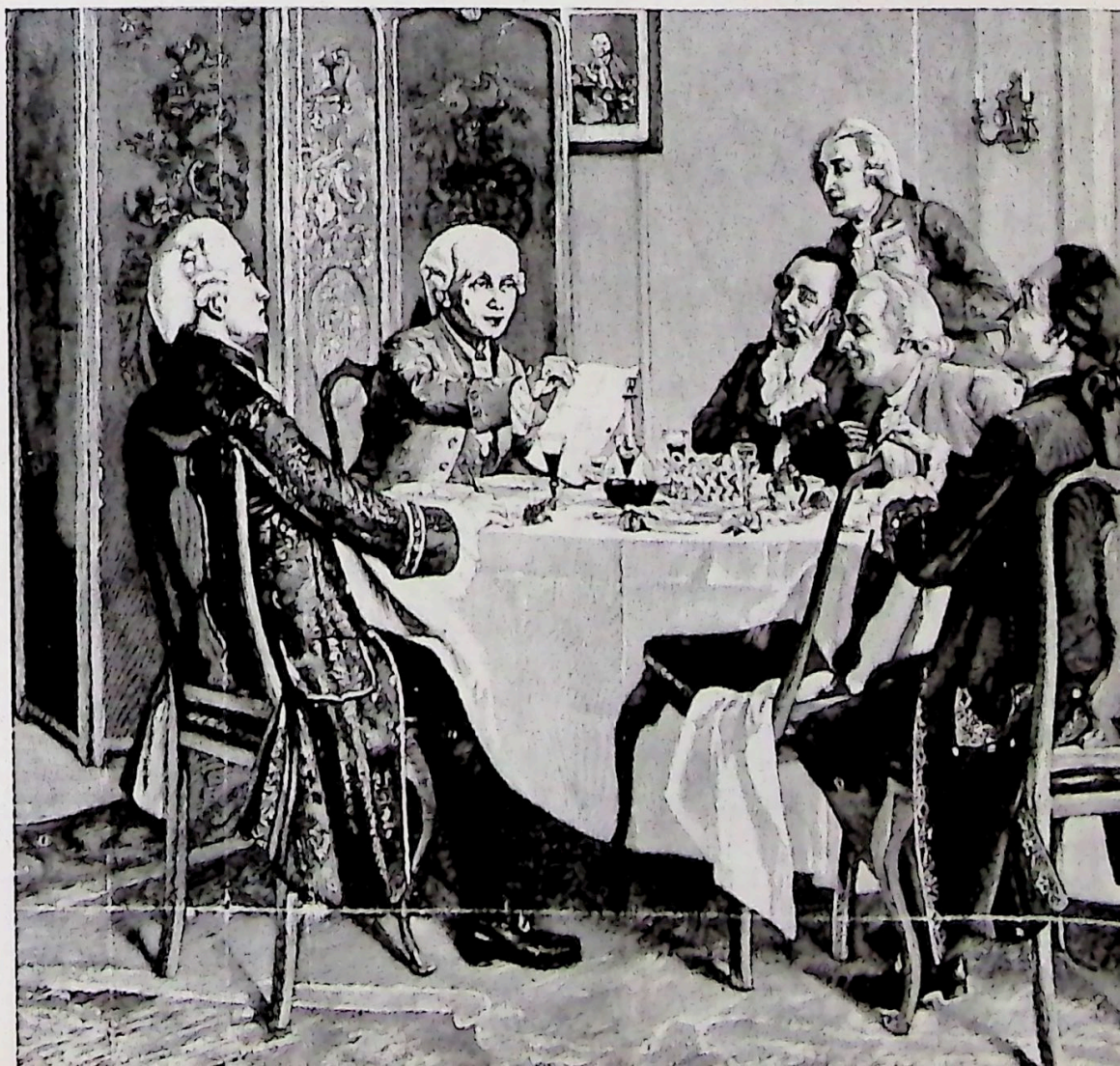
Critik
der
reinen Vernunft

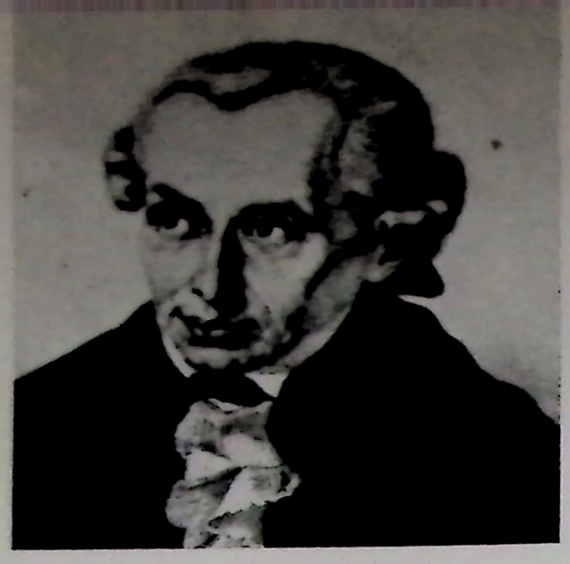
von
Immanuel Kant
Professor in Königsberg.

Riga,
verlegts Johann Friedrich Hartknoch
1781.

Title page of Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason."

Kant reading one of his essays to friends.





FROM THE WISDOM OF KANT

It is God's will, not merely that we should be happy, but that we should make ourselves happy. This is the true morality.

In law a man is guilty when he violates the rights of another. In ethics he is guilty if he only thinks of doing so.

Parents usually educate their children merely in such a manner that, however bad the world may be, they may adapt themselves to its present conditions. But they ought to give them an education so much better than this, that a better condition of things may thereby be brought about by the future.

What are the aims which are at the same time duties? They are the perfecting of ourselves, and the happiness of others.

Riches ennoble a man's circumstances, but not himself.

Every man is to be respected as an absolute end in himself; and it is a crime against the dignity that belongs to him as a human being, to use him as a mere means for some external purpose.

An action is essentially good if the motive of the agent be good, regardless of the consequences.

A state is not, like the soil upon which it is situated, a patrimony. It consists of a society of men, over whom the state alone has a right to command and dispose. It is a trunk which has its own roots.

Charity is a debt of honor.

With men, the state of nature is not a state of peace, but of war; if not of open war, then at least ever ready to break out.

Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing wonder and awe—the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me.

Man must be disciplined, for he is by nature raw and wild.

If a man is often the subject of conversation he soon becomes the subject of criticism.

However small the object of an injustice may be, the injustice itself may be very great.

Men are shamed by favors.

Everyone is bound to assert his rights and resist their invasion by others.

Always so act that the immediate motive of your will may become a universal rule for all intelligent beings.

Have patience awhile; slanders are not long-lived. Truth is the child of time; ere long she shall appear to vindicate you.

Beneficence is a duty; and he who frequently practises it, and sees his benevolent intentions realized, comes at length really to love him to whom he has done good.

One is not rich by what one owns, but more by what one is able to do without with dignity.

Everything in nature acts in conformity with law.

What renders the principle of equality inapplicable to our relations with God is, that of all beings, it is He alone who cannot be represented as subject to duty.

Duty is the obligation to act in reverence for law.

Conscience is an instinct to judge ourselves in the light of moral laws. It is not a mere faculty; it is an instinct.

Thrift is care and scruple in the spending of one's means. It is not a virtue, and it requires neither skill nor talent.

Nature in an absolute manner wills that right should obtain the victory.

Freedom is alone the unoriginated birthright of man; it belongs to him by force of his humanity, and is in dependence on the will and creation of every other, in so far as this consists with every other person's freedom.

There is a limit where the intellect fails and breaks down, and this limit is where the questions concerning God, and freewill, and immortality arise.

Seek not the favor of the multitude; it is seldom got by honest and lawful means. Seek the testimony of the few; and number not voices, but weigh them.

No virtue is ever so strong that it is beyond temptation.

That kings should become philosophers, or philosophers kings, can scarce be expected; nor is it to be wished, since the enjoyment of power inevitably corrupts the judgment of reason, and perverts its liberty.

The busier we are, the more acutely we feel that we live, the more conscious we are of life.

Space and time, and with them all phenomena, are not things by themselves, but representations, and cannot exist outside the mind.

God's perfections are marvellous but not lovable.

The wish to talk to God is absurd. We cannot talk to one we cannot comprehend—and we cannot comprehend God; we can only believe in Him. The uses of prayer are thus only subjective.

Sincerity is the indispensable ground of all conscientiousness, and by consequence of all heartfelt religion.

So act that your principle of action might safely be made a law for the whole world.

JOHN MILTON

Where there is much desire to learn, there of necessity will be much arguing, much writing, and many opinions; for opinion in good men is but knowledge in the making.

The best apology against false accusers is silence, sufferance and honest deeds set against dishonest words.

Hypocrisy—the only evil that walks invisible, except to God alone.

Jo: Milton

JOHN MILTON was born in Bread Street, London, on December 9, 1608. "My father," he wrote, "destined me, while yet a little boy for the study of humane letters. Both at the grammar-school and also under other masters at home, he caused me to be instructed daily." At the age of seventeen he was admitted to Cambridge. Here his first years were darkened by unpopularity and a quarrel with the college authorities, but he worked diligently and by the time he received his Master of Arts degree in 1632, his unusual powers had won him recognition and esteem.

Milton's literary gifts were apparent early. *On the Morning of Christ's Nativity* was written while the poet was still at Cambridge. *L'Allegro* and its companion piece, *Il Penseroso;* two masques, *Arcades* and *Comus;* and *Lycidas,* an elegy for a college friend drowned at sea, were the fruit of six years of study, chiefly of the classics, that followed his university career.

In 1643, when he was thirty-five, Milton married Mary Powell, the seventeen-year-old daughter of a Cavalier family. After a few weeks she returned to her home and seemed to have no intention of continuing the relationship. Two years later, however, she came back, and their married life was resumed. There were three daughters of this union and a son who died in infancy. Mary Powell herself died in childbirth in 1654.

In the same year that his wife left him, Milton wrote his famous treatise, *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce, Restored to the good of both sexes from the Bondage of Canon Law and other Mistakes,* asserting that marriage being a "private matter" could be dissolved in cases of incompatibility. This incendiary tract and another on the same subject happened to have been published without a license immediately after the enactment of a new ordinance requiring the licensing of all works. Accordingly, proceedings against Milton were instituted. His answer was *Areopagitica, a Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing,* published without a license.

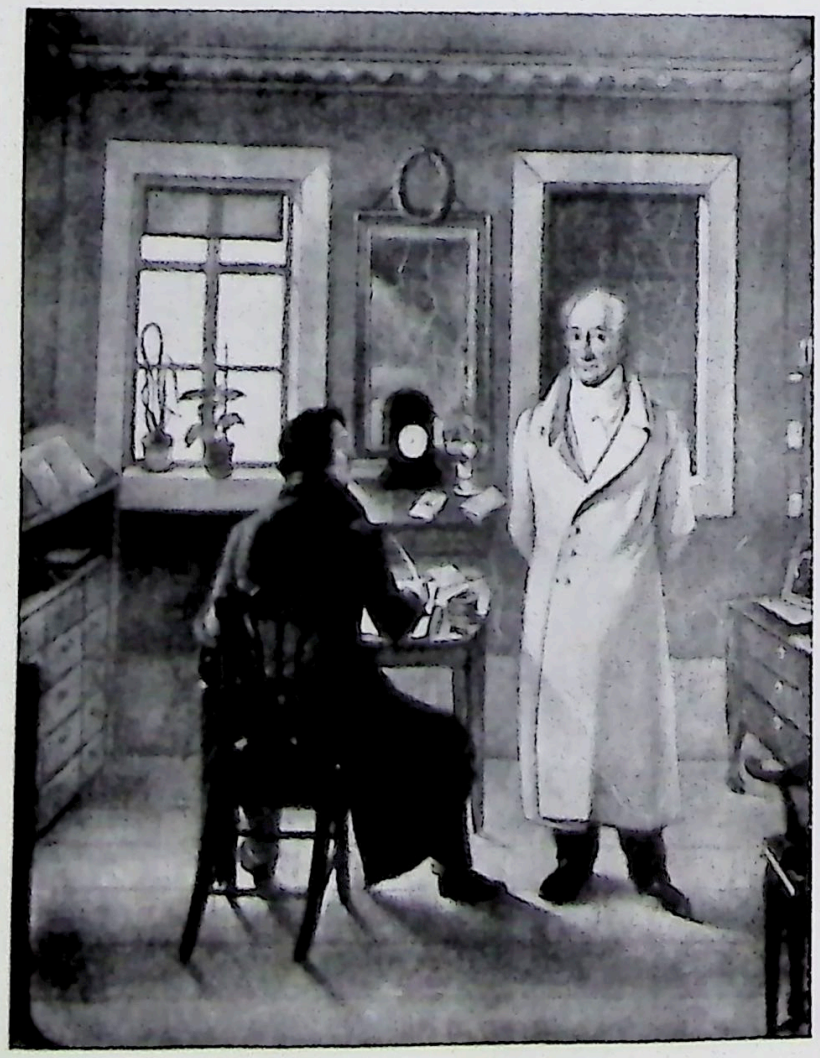
With the fall of the Stuarts in 1649, Milton mobilized his energies in the service of Cromwell and the Commonwealth. In answer to *Eikon Basilike,* a work of disputed authorship purporting to be the last meditations of Charles I, he wrote *Eikonoklastes,* a point by point refutation. Published the same year was a pamphlet entitled *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates, proving that it is lawful, and hath been held so in all ages, for any who have the power, to call to account a Tyrant or wicked King, and, after due conviction, to depose and put him to death, if the ordinary Magistrate have neglected or denied to do it.* This was probably instrumental in Milton's appointment as Latin Secretary to the Council of State, a position he retained until 1660. The poet continued to defend the Commonwealth against the attacks of continental writers in a series of Latin tractates. This controversy raged for four years with an extraordinary degree of violence and personal vituperation; Milton's participation against the advice of physicians brought him to total blindness.

The Restoration put an end to Milton's public life and forced him to go into hiding. Just why he was not executed with the other prominent supporters of the Commonwealth is not clear. At the age of fifty-two, after nineteen years of stormy political activity, he again turned to the studious and literary pursuits of his youth. To this last period of his life belong his greatest poetic achievements: *Paradise Lost* (1667); its sequel, *Paradise Regained* (1671); and finally *Samson Agonistes* (1671).

Underlying this vigorous literary activity was the loneliness of Milton's personal life. Totally blind at the time of Mary Powell's death, he lived in helpless dependence on his motherless daughters, who grew up resenting him and careless of his comfort and wishes. This bleak home life was interrupted briefly in 1656 by the poet's marriage to Katherine Woodcock, who died in childbirth less than a year later. In 1663 he married Elizabeth Minshull, then but twenty-five. She seems to have brightened his last decade, which was passed in quiet study tempered with music and the company of friends. Weakened by the gout and other maladies, he died on November 8, 1674.

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

Goethe dictating to his secretary.



GOETHE was born August 28, 1749, at Frankfurt-on-Main. His father was a lawyer of independent means and an imperial councillor; his mother was the daughter of the mayor of Frankfurt. The first sixteen years of his life were spent almost entirely at home, where he gained some acquaintance with the Bible and the classics, Italian, Hebrew, English, music, and drawing.

In 1765 Goethe began his preparation for the law by attending the University of Leipzig. However, it was literature rather than law that occupied him. Moved by his love for a young woman, he began to turn "everything which rejoiced or troubled me into a picture or a poem." A serious breakdown of his health in 1768 cut short his stay at Leipzig. After a long period of convalescence, much of which was devoted to the study of Paracelsus, alchemy, and "natural magic," Goethe went to Strasbourg, where in 1771 he completed his legal training.

While at Strasbourg, Goethe became acquainted with Herder, who, he later remarked, "tore down the curtain which had covered the poverty of German literature." Together they studied Gothic architecture, read Homer, Shakespeare, Ossian, and folksong, and discussed a new German literature. When Goethe returned to Frankfurt in 1771, he had schemes for dramas and various literary works but no strong desire to practise law. That same year he began his first important work, the drama celebrating the sixteenth century robber-knight, Gotz von Berlichingen. After a period of several months spent at the imperial courts at Wetzlar, where he knew and loved Lotte Buff, Goethe produced his novel, the *Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774), written "as by a somnambulist" in four weeks' time. Both the *Werther* and the *Gotz,* published a year previously, had an enormous success and inaugurated the literary movement known as *Sturm und Drang* (Storm and Stress). They found many imitators throughout Europe; even the clothes that Werther wore became the fashion; and for a long time thereafter Goethe was known only as the "author of Werther."

Goethe once remarked: "I am like a snake, I slough my skin and start afresh." In 1775, in the midst of his literary triumph, he accepted the invitation of Duke Karl August and moved to the court at Weimar, which was to remain his home for the rest of his life. He was reproached by his friends for abandoning his literary talents, and he soon became so involved with duties of state that for the next ten years he spent little time in writing. He was not long in Weimar before he was entrusted with almost all the offices of the tiny State. As councillor of legation, he attended the privy council and the trial of prisoners. He also had charge of the war and finance commissions as well as the administration of roads, mines, and forests. In 1782 he was raised to the nobility by the emperor and a short time later became president of the chamber.

Partly in connection with his new duties at Weimar, Goethe revived the interest in science that he had first shown at Strasbourg. He took up again the study of anatomy and in 1784 discovered that the intermaxillary bone exists in man in a rudimentary form, thus contributing to the development of the evolutionary doctrine. His experiments with the structure and growth of plants provided him with the material later incorporated in his *Metamorphoses of Plants.* He also began his work in optics.

Although eminently successful in carrying

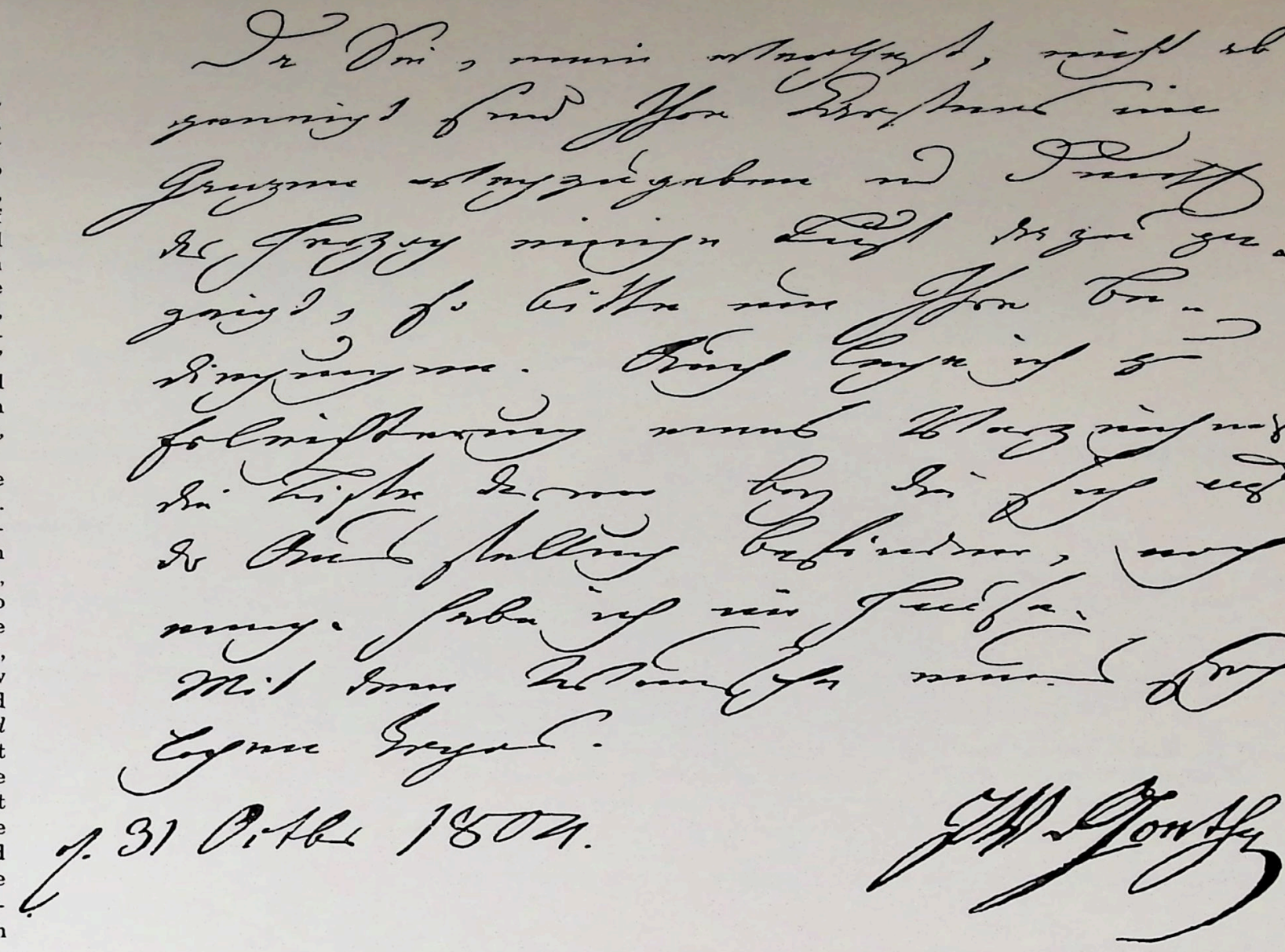
out his practical duties, Goethe came to regret them as a "terrible disease" which kept him from writing, and "grievously disturbed my creative power." In 1786, determined to escape them for a time, he set out for Italy, disguised as a merchant under the name of Moller. For twenty-two months he remained in Italy and felt that he "found himself again as an artist." Under the influence of what he regarded as the classical spirit, he resolved, "I will occupy myself only with lasting condition, such as we see in the Greek statues." With that inspiration he re-worked and completed many of the books he had begun previously, including *Iphigenie auf Tauris, Torquato Tasso,* and *Egmont.*

After his return to Weimar in 1788, Goethe found it impossible to resume his former life. "My outer man," he wrote, "could not accustom itself to the change." His Italian sojourn had separated him from Charlotte von Stein, whom he had loved for twelve years, and to the scandal of Weimar he took into his house Christine Vulpius, a young factory worker, whom he finally married in 1806. His new classic dramas attracted little attention, and Germany seemed to like only the *Sturm und Drang* literature, which he felt he had left far behind. Schiller had then begun his rise to literary fame, and Goethe at the time felt Schiller was in every way his opposite. He was delighted, however, when Schiller invited him in 1794 to contribute to a new review he was starting. Shortly afterwards, their meeting occurred, inaugurating a friendship which was to last until the younger poet's death.

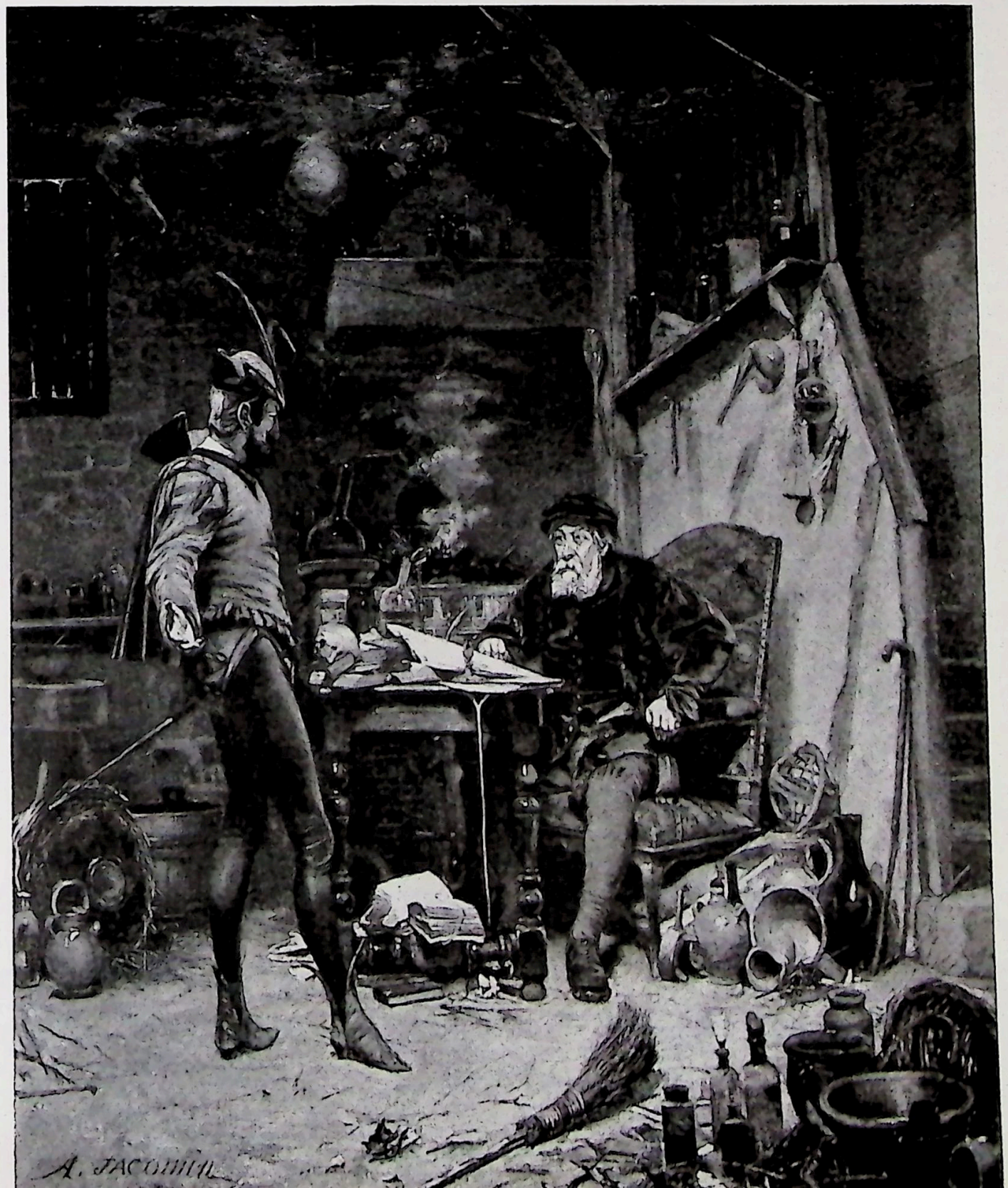
Largely under Schiller's influence, Goethe returned to literature with renewed interest. Together they wrote the *Xenian,* attacking the literary foibles of their time. Goethe, to some extent inspired the plays of Schiller, which he produced as the director of the ducal theater. He wrote *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* (1796), the epic of idyll, *Hermann and Dorothea,* and a number of poems. He was also persuaded to resume work upon the Faust legend, which he had begun to dramatize as early as 1774. He had published a fragment of it in 1790. At the constant urging of Schiller he now completed the first part, which was published in 1808. It immediately won an enthusiastic reception, even from those most opposed to the classicism of the Weimar school.

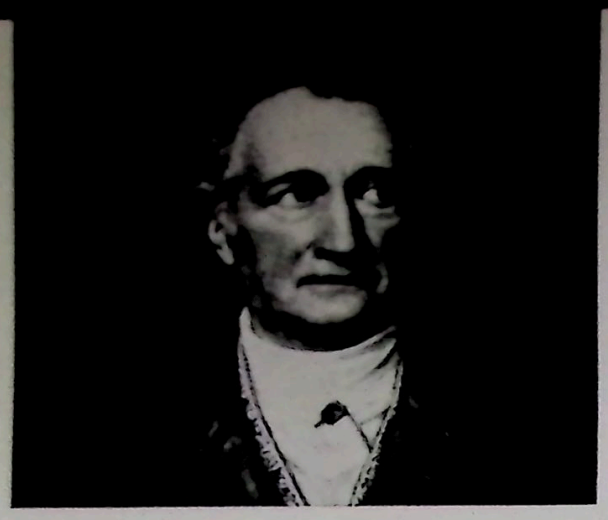
After Schiller's death Goethe ceased to take any active part in the literary movements of his day, although he continued to direct the Weimar theatre until 1817 and was the recognized dean of German literature. Nor was he much involved with the great political events of his time. He tended to regard Napoleon as the defender of civilization against the Slavs, and in the interview between the two men at Erfurt in 1808 the poet reciprocated the admiration of the French conqueror, who began the meeting by exclaiming: *"Vous etes un home."* Goethe still continued to produce a great volume of literary work of all kinds. In 1810 he brought out his *Theory of Color.* The following year he began his autobiography, under the title of *Poetry and Truth. Wilhelm Meister's Travel Years* first appeared in 1821.

In 1824 Goethe returned to work on the second part of *Faust,* and by 1832 the poem was completed. Although often interrupted, the composition of *Faust* had taken Goethe almost sixty years. Shortly after its completion, on March 31, Goethe died. He was buried beside Karl August in the ducal vault at Weimar, to which the remains of Schiller were also removed.



Mephistopheles and Faust in a scene from Goethe's "Faust."





FROM THE WISDOM OF GOETHE

Thinking is easy, acting is difficult, and to put one's thoughts into action is the most difficult thing in the world.

Wisdom is only found in truth.

I am fully convinced that the soul is indestructible, and that its activity will continue through eternity. It is like the sun, which, to our eyes, seems to set in night; but it has in reality only gone to diffuse its lights elsewhere.

The multitude grows neither old nor wise; it always remains in its infancy.

Hatred is something peculiar. You will always find it strongest and most violent where there is the lowest degree of culture.

The greatest difficulties lie where we are not looking for them.

He is the happiest, be he king or peasant, who finds peace in his home.

The decline of literature indicates the decline of a nation; the two keep pace in their downward tendency.

The day is immeasurably long to him who knows not how to value and use it.

Nine requisites for contented living: Health enough to make work a pleasure. Wealth enough to support your needs. Strength to battle with difficulties and overcome them. Grace enough to confess your sins and forsake them. Patience enough to toil until some good is accomplished. Charity enough to see some good in your neighbor. Love enough to move you to be useful and helpful to others. Faith enough to make real the things of God. Hope enough to remove all anxious fears concerning the future.

Nothing is more terrible than ignorance in action.

Sin writes histories; goodness is silent.

The art of living rightly is like all arts; it must be learned and practiced with incessant care.

A useless life is an early death.

We always have time enough, if we will but use it aright.

Kindness is the golden chain by which society is bound together.

Genius develops in quiet places, character out in the full current of human life.

Ignorant men raise questions that wise men answered a thousand years ago.

Solitude is fine when you are at peace with yourself and have something definite to do.

It is delightful to transport one's self into the spirit of the past, to see how a wise man has thought before us, and to what a glorious height we have at last reached.

There are but two roads that lead to an important goal and to the doing of great things: Strength and perseverance. Strength is the lot of but a few privileged men; but austere perseverance, harsh and continuous, may be employed by the smallest of us and rarely fails of its purpose, for its silent power grows irresistibly greater with time.

The world is a singularly stupendous fool.

It is better to be deceived by one's friends than to deceive them.

All good ideas have already been thought; the point is to try and think them again.

It is always better to say right out what you think without worrying too much about proving your point. After all, our proofs are only variations of our opinions, and the contrary-minded listen neither to one nor the other.

Fools are never uneasy. Stupidity is without anxiety.

Everything is simpler than you think and at the same time more complex than you imagine.

In all things it is better to hope than to despair.

Faith is hidden household capital.

Energy will do anything that can be done in the world; and no talents, no circumstances, no opportunities will make a two-legged animal a man without it.

A flippant, frivolous man may ridicule others, may controvert them, scorn them; but he who has any respect for himself seems to have renounced the right of thinking meanly of others.

Architecture is frozen music.

Men are so constituted that every one undertakes what he sees another successful in, whether he has aptitude for it or not.

Be genuine and strenuous; earn for yourself, and look for grace from those in high places; from the powerful, favor; from the active and good, advancement; from the many, affection; from the individual, love.

It is equally a mistake to hold one's self too high, or to rate one's self too cheap.

I respect the man who knows distinctly what he wishes. The greater part of all the mischief in the world arises from the fact that men do not sufficiently understand their own aims. They have undertaken to build a tower, and spend no more labor on the foundation than would be necessary to erect a hut.

Behavior is a mirror in which every one shows his image.

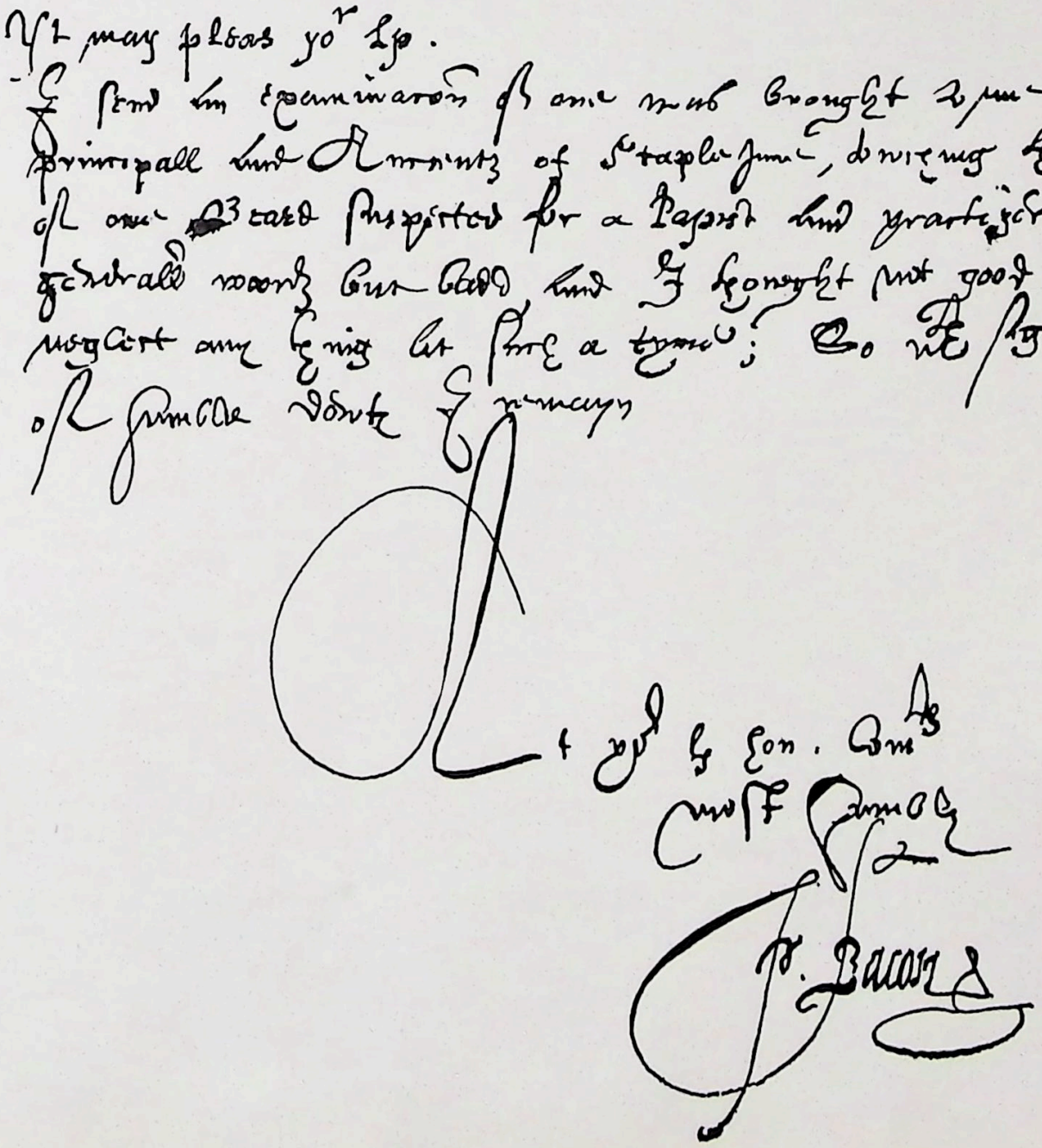
Nothing is worth more than this day.

FRANCIS BACON

Reading makes a full man; conference a ready man and writing an exact man.

If money be not your servant, it will be your master. The covetous man cannot so properly be said to possess wealth, as that may be said to possess him.

Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read but not curiously; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention.



BACON was born January 22, 1561, in York House, London. He was the youngest son of Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper of the Seal and Chancellor. His mother, Lady Anne Cooke, enjoyed some renown as a classicist and was sister-in-law to Sir William Cecil, Lord Burghley.

At the age of twelve Bacon entered Trinity College, where he resided for three years with his elder brother. He later claimed that it was at Cambridge as a student not yet sixteen that "he first fell into the dislike of the philosophy of Aristotle," which he judged to be "barren of the production of works for the benefit of the life of man." On leaving the university, he was sent to Paris in the retinue of the English ambassador to complete his political education.

Recalled to England by the sudden death of his father in 1579, Bacon returned to find that he had been left the "narrow portion" of a younger son and had his livelihood to gain. He applied himself to the study of law at Gray's Inn and in 1582 was admitted to the bar.

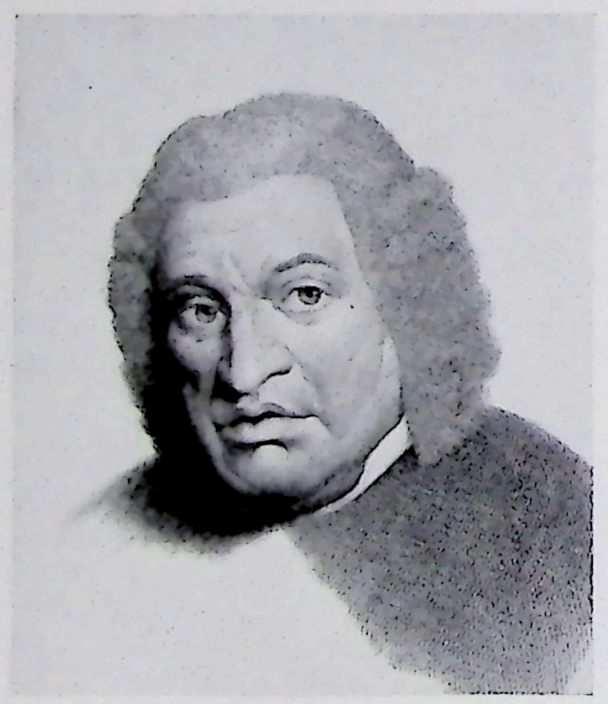
Bacon was also engaged in scientific and literary work that even at the time enhanced his reputation. In a long letter to his uncle, written when he was thirty-one, he confessed, "I have as vast contemplative ends as I have moderate civil ends, for I have taken all knowledge for my province." In 1597 he published the first edition of his *Essays*. Included with them was a short tract entitled *Colours of Good and Evil*. This was the first published part of his ambitious project for the "Great Instauration" of science to restore to man the command over nature. In 1605 he published the *Advancement of Learning,* which was to occupy the first part in his plan.

With the accession of James I, Bacon rapidly rose to power in the political world. Writing in defense of the royal policies, he became one of the leaders of the King's cause against Parliament. In defending the royal prerogative, he was opposed to Sir Edward Coke, the greatest lawyer of the time, who had long been his rival. In 1621 Bacon became the object of Parliamentary attack, which was directed not only against him but also against the King. He was found guilty by the high court of Parliament which decided that he should pay a fine of £40,000, be imprisoned in the tower at the King's pleasure, and neither hold any public office nor come "within the verge of the court."

Although the sentence was not fully carried out, Bacon never again held public office. He devoted the last years of his life to the elaboration of his "Instauratio Magna." His efforts, however, were limited almost entirely to his own writings, and he appears to have had little knowledge of the work of other scientists. He did not know William Gilbert, physician to both Elizabeth and James I, nor was he a member of the scientific association that regularly gathered at Gilbert's house. He was a patient of William Harvey, yet seems not to have known of his investigations; Harvey in fact later remarked that Bacon "writes philosophy like a lord chancellor." Bacon's last works, except for the *New Atlantis,* written between 1614 and 1617, were fitted into his over-all project. The *Novum Organum* (1620) was to serve as the second of the six parts of his plan. In 1623 under the title *De Augmentis Scientiarum* he brought out a Latin translation of the *Advancement of Learning,* containing many additions designed to fill out the other parts of his system. When death overtook him, April 9, 1626, he was still engaged in that task.

BOSWELL AND JOHNSON

James Boswell.



Samuel Johnson.

JAMES BOSWELL, who always considered his life "one of the most romantic," took great satisfaction in his distinguished lineage and was constantly alluding to the "blood of Bruce in my veins" and to Thomas Boswell who fell on the field of Flodden. His grandfather had built up a substantial legal practice at the Scottish bar, and his father, also an advocate, on his elevation to the supreme court, became Lord Auchinleck, taking the name of his Ayrshire property. It was Lord Auchinleck's desire that his eldest son should become a lawyer, and he was accordingly sent to Edinburgh and later to Glasgow, where he studied rhetoric and moral philosophy under Adam Smith.

At Edinburgh, Boswell made the acquaintance of the Reverend William Temple to whom, in a correspondence of thirty-seven years, he poured out his "weak distemper'd soul that swells in sudden gusts and sinks again in calms." He called upon David Hume, then residing in the city, and found him "a very proper person for a young man to cultivate an acquaintance with." Constrained to study law with his father after a brief jaunt to London, where he had "got his mind filled with the most gayeideas," he sought out the company of such celebrities as he found in the northern capital and "got into an excellent method of taking down conversations." At length in 1763, by agreeing to relinquish his plan to enter the Guard, he obtained his father's permission to complete his legal studies at Utrecht.

For Boswell 1763 was a "memorable year" since, in it, he made the acquaintance of Samuel Johnson. On Monday, the sixteenth of May, he was sitting in the back parlor of Mr. Davies' bookstore, when Johnson came unexpectedly into the shop. Davies perceived him through the glass door and pointed him out to Boswell "in the manner of Horatio, when he addresses Hamlet on the appearance of his father's ghost." Boswell at this first encounter was thoroughly snubbed, but with "characteristical" resilience, bolstered by Tom Davies' assurance: "Don't be uneasy: I can see he likes you very well," he called on Johnson eight days later. On this occasion, Johnson pressed him to stay; on the thirteenth of June he said, "Come to me as often as you can"; on the twenty-fifth of June, Boswell gave the great man a little sketch of his own life, and Johnson exclaimed with warmth, "Give me your hand; I have taken a liking to you." In August, when Boswell set out for Utrecht, Johnson accompanied him as far as Harwich.

After a winter divided between study of the law and the company of "many beautiful and amiable ladies," Boswell embarked on a two-year tour of the continent, where he forced his acquaintance on such leading figures as Voltaire and Rousseau and proceeded to "Boswellize" them, drawing them out on various subjects.

In accordance with the terms of the agreement with his father, Boswell returned to Edinburgh and in July, 1766, was admitted to the Scottish bar. "What strength of mind you have had!" was Boswell's comment on his early legal work. He had hoped, too, that the "character to support," which his successful authorship of *Account of Corsica* had given him, would furnish the incentive to "a better course of life." But the long list of encounters with "little charmers" and heiresses, which fill his letters to Temple at this time, attest to his failure. Despite his reluctance to "resign his liberty for life to one Woman," he married his cousin Margaret Montgomerie in 1769.

For two years after his marriage he continued to practise law in Edinburgh but in 1772 he was again in London with his biographical notebook. Upon Johnson's recommendation he was elected to the Club. In August of 1773, the Great Lexicographer, then well over sixty, suddenly consented to Boswell's constantly urged project of a tour through Scotland. Boswell carefully planned the expedition down to the last detail and in every way extended himself to entertain his friend. "It is very convenient to travel with him," Johnson wrote Mrs. Thrale, "for there is no house where he is not received with kindness and respect. He has better faculties than I imagined." There was no qualification in Boswell's appreciation of the uncouth old man, whom his father described as "an auld dominie, who keepit a schule and ca'd it an academy," and his wife called a bear. He wrote in the day-by-day account of their travels, *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides:* "Had I not Dr. Johnson to contemplate, I should have sunk into dejection but his firmness supported me. I looked at him as a man, whose head is turning giddy at sea, looks at a rock."

The years following the tour to the Hebrides were increasingly a story of quarrels with his father, financial worries, alcoholism, and melancholia, the "black dog" of hypochondria, as Boswell described it. Signing himself "The Hypochondriack," he contributed a series of some seventy essays on various moral and religious subjects to the *London Magazine.* On June 30, 1784, Boswell and Johnson dined at Sir Joshua Reynolds' and rode home together. Boswell recalled the old man's "fare you well" and how, without looking back, he had "sprung away with a kind of pathetick briskness." He had not accompanied Johnson into the house "from an apprehension that my spirits would sink," and, although Johnson did not die until December, Boswell never saw him again.

During the years after Johnson's death, Boswell attempted unsuccessfully to enter parliament and to build up a law practice in England, nourishing "the delusion" for the rest of his life "that practice may come at any time." Painstakingly he labored on his biography of Johnson, "arranging a prodigious multiplicity of materials, supplying omissions, searching for papers buried in different masses." After the death of his wife in 1789, he sank further into melancholia and alcoholism, always vowing reform. Neither the critics' universal praise of his *Tour to the Hebrides* (1785) and *The Life of Samuel Johnson* (1791), nor the "several matrimonial schemes" he entertained from time to time, could keep him his "fluttering self" for long. He died in London, of a complication of disorders, on May 19, 1795.

FROM THE WISDOM OF JOHNSON

All knowledge is of itself of some value. There is nothing so minute or inconsiderable that I would not rather know it than not.

I never desire to converse with a man who has written more than he has read.

Health is certainly more valuable than money, because it is by health that money is procured.

Mankind has a great aversion to intellectual labor; but even supposing knowledge to be easily attainable, more people would be content to be ignorant than would take even a little trouble to acquire it.

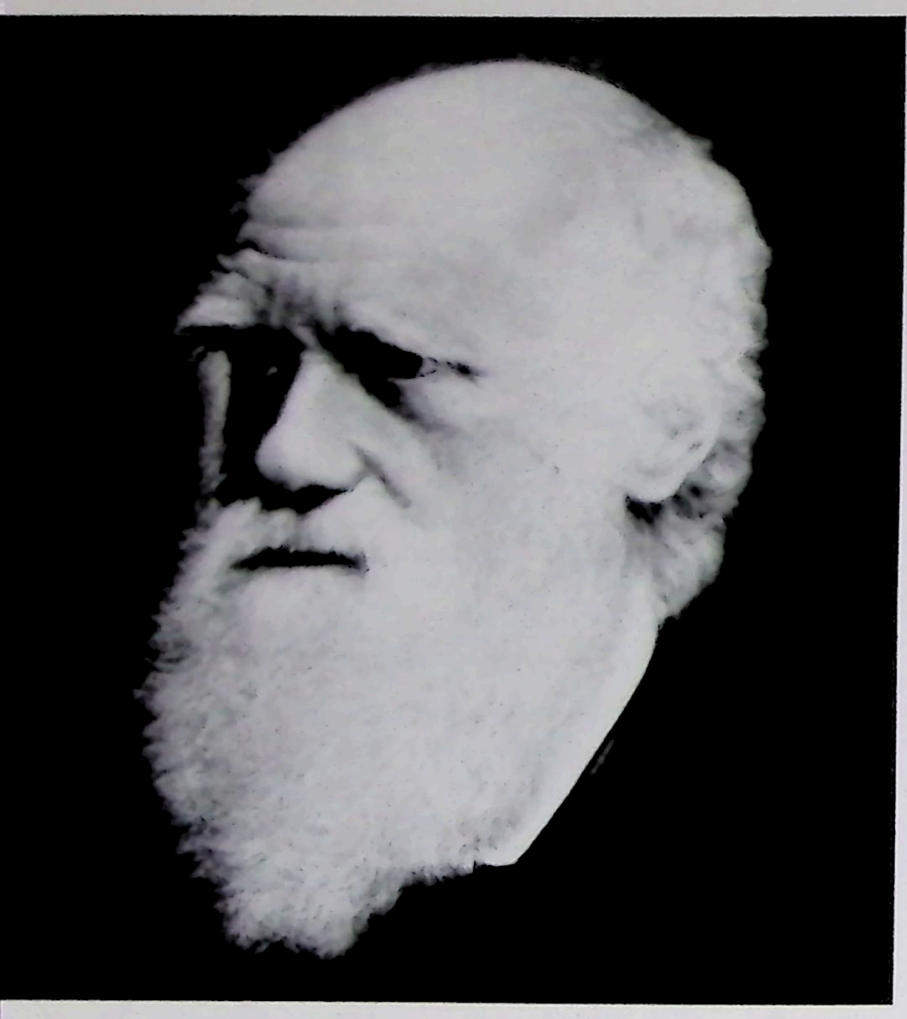
Knowledge is of two kinds: We know a subject ourselves, or we know where we can find information upon it.

Gratitude is a fruit of great cultivation; you do not find it among gross people.

Books have always a secret influence on the understanding; we cannot at pleasure obliterate ideas: He that reads books of science, though without any desire fixed of improvement, will grow more knowing; he that entertains himself with moral or religious treatises, will imperceptibly advance in goodness; the ideas which are often offered to the mind, will at last find a lucky moment when it is disposed to receive them.

A life that will bear the inspection of men and of God, is the only certificate of true religion.

Boswell and Johnson enjoyed conversing with one another while taking daily walks on Fleet Street in London.



CHARLES DARWIN

IN EVALUATING the qualities that accounted for his "success as a man of science," Charles Darwin in his modest autobiography, written "because it might possibly interest my children," traces from his early youth, "the strongest desire to understand and explain" whatever he observed. His childhood fantasies were concerned with fabulous discoveries in natural history; to his schoolmates he boasted that he could produce variously colored flowers of the same plant by watering them with certain colored fluids.

His father, a highly successful physician, was somewhat puzzled by the singular interests of his second son as well as by his undistinguished career in the classical curriculum of Dr. Butler's day school; he accordingly decided to send him to Edinburgh to study medicine. At Edinburgh Darwin collected animals in tidal pools, trawled for oysters with Newhaven fishermen to obtain specimens, and made two small discoveries which he incorporated in papers read before the Plinian Society. He put forth no very "strenuous effort" to learn medicine.

With some asperity, Dr. Darwin proposed the vocation of clergyman as an alternative. The life of a country clergyman appealed to young Darwin, and, after quieting his doubts concerning his belief in "all the dogmas of the Church," he began this new career at Cambridge. He proved unable, however, to repress his scientific interests and developed into an ardent entomologist, particularly devoted to collecting beetles; he had the satisfaction of seeing one of his rare specimens published in Stephen's *Illustrations of British Insects.* As at Edinburgh, he enjoyed many stimulating associations with men of science. It was a professor of botany at Cambridge, J. S. Henslow, who arranged for his appointment as naturalist on the government ship, H. M. S. *Beagle.*

From 1831 to 1836 the *Beagle* voyaged in Southern waters. Lyell's researches into the changes wrought by natural processes, set forth in *Principles of Geology,* gave direction to Darwin's own observations of the geological structure of the Cape Verde Islands.

After his return, Darwin settled in London and began the task of organizing and recording his observations. He became a close friend of Lyell, the leading English geologist, and later of Hooker, an outstanding botanist. In 1839 he married his cousin, Emma Wedgwood, and toward the end of 1842, because of Darwin's chronic ill-health, the family moved to Down, where he lived in seclusion for the rest of his days. During the six years in London, he prepared his *Journal* from the notes of the voyage and published his carefully documented study of *Coral Reefs.*

The next eight years were spent in the laborious classification of barnacles for his four-volume work on that subject. "I have been struck," he wrote to Hooker, "with the variability of every part in some slight degree of every species." After this period of detailed work with a single species, Darwin felt prepared to attack the problem of the modification of species which he had been pondering for many years.

A number of facts had come to light during the voyage of the *Beagle* that Darwin felt "could only be explained on the supposition that species gradually become modified." Later, after his return to England, he had collected all the material he could find which "bore in any way on the variation of plants and animals under domestication." He soon perceived "that selection was the keystone of man's success. But how selection could be applied to organisms living in a state of nature remained for some time a mystery." One day, while reading Malthus on *Population,* it suddenly occurred to him how, in the struggle for existence, which he had everywhere observed, "favorable variations would tend to be preserved and unfavorable ones to be destroyed. The result would be the formation of a new species. Here then I had at last a theory by which to work."

He confided this theory to Hooker and Lyell, who urged him to write out his views for publication. But Darwin worked deliberately: he was only half through his projected book when, in the summer of 1858, he received an essay from A. R. Wallace at Ternate in the Moluccas, containing exactly the same theory as his own. Darwin submitted his dilemma to Hooker and Lyell, to whom he wrote: "Your words have come true with a vengeance—that I should be forestalled." It was their decision to publish an abstract of his theory from a letter of the previous year together with Wallace's essay, the joint work being entitled: *On the Tendency of Species to form Varieties and on the Perpetuation of Varieties and Species by Natural Means of Selection.*

A year later, on November 24, 1859, *The Origin of Species* appeared. The entire first edition of 1,250 copies was sold on the day of publication. A storm of controversy arose over the book, reaching its height at a meeting of the British Association at Oxford, where the celebrated duel between T. H. Huxley and Bishop Wilberforce took place. Darwin, who could not sleep when he answered an antagonist harshly, took Lyell's advice and saved both "time and temper" by avoiding the fray.

In his work, however, he stayed close to his thesis. He expanded the material of the first chapter of the *Origin* into a book, *Variation of Plants and Animals under Domestication* (1868). In *The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex* (1871), Darwin fulfilled his statement in the *Origin* that "light would be thrown on the origin of man and his history." The *Expressions of the Emotions* (1872) offered a natural explanation of phenomena which appeared to be a difficulty in the way of the acceptance of evolution.

Darwin's existence at Down was peculiarly adapted to preserve his energy and give direct order to his activity. Because of his continual ill-health, his wife took pains "to shield him from every avoidable annoyance." He observed the same routine for nearly forty years, his days being carefully parcelled into intervals of exercise and light reading in such proportions that he could utilize to his fullest capacity the four hours he devoted to work. His scientific reading and experimentation, as well, were organized with the most rigorous economy. Even the phases of his intellectual life non-essential to his work became, as he put it, "atrophied," a fact which he regretted as "a loss of happiness." Such non-scientific reading as he did was purely for relaxation, and he thought that "a law ought to be passed" against unhappy endings to novels.

With his wife and seven children his manner was so unusually "affectionate and delightful" that his son, Francis, marvelled that he could preserve it "with such an undemonstrative race as we are." When he died on April 19, 1882, his family wanted him to be buried at Down; public feeling decreed that he should be interred in Westminster Abbey, where he was laid beside Sir Isaac Newton.

FROM THE WISDOM OF DARWIN

If I had my life to live over again, I would have made a rule to read some poetry and listen to some music at least once a week; for perhaps the parts of my brain now atrophied would have thus been kept active through use. The loss of these tastes is a loss of happiness, and may possibly be injurious to the intellect, and more probably to the moral character, by enfeebling the emotional part of our nature.

The highest possible stage in moral culture is when we recognize that we ought to control our thoughts.

As man advanced gradually in intellectual power, and was enabled to trace the more remote consequences of his actions; as he acquired sufficient knowledge to reject baneful customs and superstitions; as he regarded more and more, not only the welfare, but the happiness of his fellowmen; as from habit, following beneficial experience, his sympathies became more tender and widely diffused, extending to men of all races, and finally to the lower animals, so would the standard of his morality rise higher and higher.

Looking to future generations, there is no cause to fear that the social instincts will grow weaker, and we may expect that virtuous habits will grow stronger. The struggle between our higher and lower impulses will be less severe, and virtue will be triumphant.

Believing as I do that man in the distant future will be a far more perfect creature than he now is, it is an intolerable thought that he and all other sentient beings are doomed to complete annihilation after such long-continued slow progress. To those who fully admit the immortality of the human soul, the destruction of our world will not appear so dreadful.

A man who dares to waste one hour of life has not discovered the value of life.

Progress has been much more general than retrogression.

All ought to refrain from marriage who cannot avoid abject poverty for their children; for poverty is not only a great evil, but tends to its own increase by leading to recklessness in marriage.

Any animal whatever, endowed with well-marked social instincts, the parental and filial affections being here included, would inevitably acquire a moral sense or conscience, as soon as its intellectual powers had become as well, or nearly as well, developed as in man.

Man derives his moral sense from the social feelings which are instinctive or innate in the lower animals.

Man scans with scrupulous care the character and pedigree of his horses, cattle, and dogs before he matches them; but when he comes to his own marriage he rarely, or never, takes any such care.

False facts are highly injurious to the progress of science, for they often endure long; but false views, if supported by some evidence, do little harm, for everyone takes a salutary pleasure in proving their falseness; and when this is done, one path toward error is closed and the road to truth is often at the same time opened.

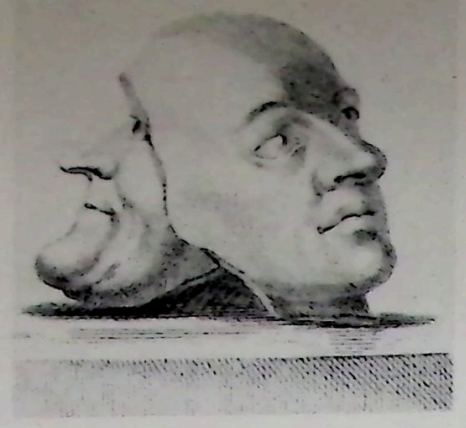
The very reputation of being strong-willed, plucky, and indefatigable is of priceless value. It cows enemies, and dispels opposition to our undertakings.

Even when we are quite alone, how often do we think with pleasure or pain of what others think of us—of their imagined approbation or disapprobation.

Music arouses in us various emotions, but not the more terrible ones of horror, fear, and rage. It awakens rather the gentler feelings of tenderness and love, which readily passes into devotion. It likewise stirs up in us the sense of triumph and the glorious ardor for war.

A moral being is one who is capable of reflecting on his past actions and their motives—of approving of some and disapproving of others.

Without the accumulation of capital the arts could not progress, and it is chiefly through their power that the civilized races have extended, and are now everywhere extending their range, so as to take the place of the lower races.



SIGMUND FREUD

FREUD was born May 6, 1856, at Freiburg in what is now Czechoslovakia. When he was four, the family moved to Vienna, and his father continued his trade as a small merchant. While following the usual course of studies at the *Gymnasium,* where for seven years he was first in his class, Freud was attracted by Darwin's theories to the study of science. Although he had no "particular predilection for the career of a physician," Freud later noted that "it was upon hearing Goethe's beautiful essay *On Nature* . . . just before I left school that I decided to become a medical student." In 1873 he entered the University of Vienna, where, he records in his autobiographical sketch, he experienced the effects of anti-Semitic prejudice.

While pursuing his medical studies, Freud began experimental investigation by studying the nervous system of the fish in the physiological laboratory of Ernst Brucke. After taking his medical degree in 1881, financial reasons compelled him to become an interne at the General Hospital. With the little spare time he had as an interne, he pursued research at the Institute of Cerebral Anatomy on the subject of nervous diseases. The publication of several monographs on cerebral paralysis in children won him the post of lecturer in neuropathology at the university, and in 1885 he was awarded a traveling fellowship to advance his studies. Having become interested the previous year in Breuer's treatment of hysteria by hypnosis, during which the patient was induced to recollect his past, Freud now chose to pursue such investigation under Charcot, the neurologist, at the Sorbonne. Freud studied with him about a year and was strengthened in his determination to take the then revolutionary step of investigating hysteria from a psychological point of view. Before returning home in 1886, he spent a few months at a children's clinic in Berlin and made extensive observations of the nervous disorders of children.

Upon his return to Vienna, Freud married and to provide for a rapidly increasing family, established himself as a specialist in nervous diseases. In the first years of his practice his principle technique "aside from haphazard psycho-therapeutic methods" was hypnotic suggestion. He resumed his friendship with Breuer and in collaboration with him published in 1895 the *Studies in Hysteria.* The partnership was dissolved after the book was completed, and soon afterwards Freud took the decisive step of replacing hypnotism by the method of "free association." Largely as a result of his extensive clinical practice, he turned to the analysis of dreams, and in 1900 provided the first statement of his doctrine in the *Interpretation of Dreams.*

Except for his brief collaboration with Breuer, Freud for more than a decade "stood completely isolated" from the medical world, and his theories, when not completely ignored, were the object of ridicule. It was not until 1902 that several young doctors began to gather around him with the intention of learning and practising psycho-analysis, and from this group grew the Viennese Psycho-Analytic Society. Although his *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1904) received more favorable public notice, the opposition to his theories increased as soon as he began publishing his views on the sexual life of children. His work, however, soon began to receive international attention from the medical profession. The Burgholzli Clinic in Zurich, in 1906, was the first institution outside of Austria to adopt the method of psycho-analysis. By 1908 Freud had colleagues throughout Europe, including Adler, Brill, Ferenczi, Ernest Jones, Jung, Sadger, and Stekel, and in that year the first International Congress of Psycho-Analysis was held at Salzburg. In the following year, at the invitation of Clark University, Freud visited the United States and gave five lectures on his discoveries, which were later published as the *Origin and Development of Psycho-Analysis*. With the establishment of the International Psycho-Analytic Association in 1910 Freud devoted his efforts with increasing success to the development of the psycho-analytic movement. Disagreement later led to a severance of relations between Freud and several of his closest associates, including Adler, Stekel, Rank, and Jung.

After 1912 Freud gave most of his time to directing the Psycho-Analytic Society, editing its various journals, and writing many monographs. Although his clinical practice was not as extensive as in previous years, he still remained active as an analyst, and his records of the case-histories of his patients cover almost fifty years.

Until the end of the first World War Freud was mainly occupied with special problems concerning the unconscious, and it was not until 1920 that he began to deal with the more general problems raised by his studies, particularly with the factors making for what he called repression. In 1920 he published *Beyond the Pleasure Principle,* and three years later the *Ego and the Id.* As early as 1913 Freud had attempted in *Totem and Taboo* "to make use of the newly discovered findings of analysis in order to investigate the origin of religions and morality." He now "returned to the cultural problems which had fascinated me long before," and published *The Future of an Illusion* (1927), *Civilization and its Discontents* (1929), and *Moses and Monotheism* (1939), which was his last book.

With the award of the Goethe Prize in 1930, when he was also given the freedom of the city of Vienna, Freud reached what he described as "the climax of my life as a citizen." But soon afterwards, Freud notes, "the boundaries of our country narrowed, and the nation would know of us no more." Upon the Nazi invasion of Austria in 1938, Freud's books were burned, the *Psychoanalytische Verlag,* directed by his son, was destroyed, and his passport confiscated. For years Freud had lived in virtual seclusion, largely because of the development of a cancer of the mouth which caused him great pain. He was finally allowed to leave Austria in 1938 after the payment of a large ransom. With his wife, a nephew, and his daughter, Anna, he went to England, where another of his sons lived. He died on September 23, 1939, in London.

Drawing by Boris Artzybasheff.

FROM THE WISDOM OF FREUD

Words have a magical power. They can bring either the greatest happiness or deepest despair; can transfer knowledge from teacher to student; words enable the orator to sway his audience and dictate its decisions. Words are capable of arousing the strongest emotions and prompting all man's actions. Do not ridicule the use of words in psychotherapy.

It seems to be certain that our present-day civilization does not inspire in us a feeling of well-being, but it is very difficult to form an opinion whether in earlier times people felt any happier and what part their cultural conditions played in the question.

A man like me cannot live without a hobby-horse, a consuming passion—in Schiller's words, a tyrant. I have found my tyrant, and in his service I know no limits. My tyrant is psychology.

I do not have a very high opinion of the bulk of mankind. I feel that the irrational forces in man's nature are so strong that the rational forces have little chance of success against them. A small minority may be able to live a life of reason, but most men are more comfortable living with their delusions and superstitions than with the truth.

Men are beginning to perceive that all this newly-won power over space and time, this conquest of the forces of nature, this fulfillment of age-old longings, has not increased the amount of pleasure they can obtain in life, has not made them feel any happier.

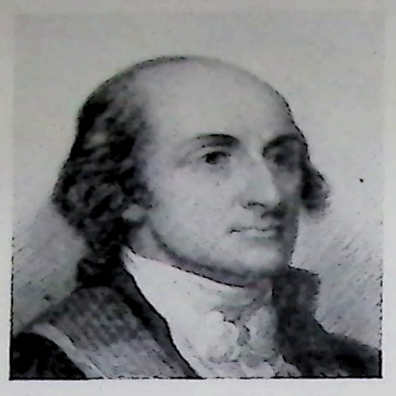
Civilized man has exchanged some part of his chances of happiness for a measure of security.

Physician, psychiatrist, scientist, psychologist—I am all of these things. But I am also something more. I am a philosopher. As a young man I longed for nothing else than philosophical knowledge, and I am now on the way to satisfy that longing by passing over from medicine to psychology.

A dream is a psychosis, with all the absurdities, delusions and illusions of a psychosis.

Life as we find it is too hard for us; it entails too much pain, too many disappointments, impossible tasks. We cannot do without palliative remedies. There are perhaps three of these means: Powerful diversions of interest, which lead us to care little about our misery; substitutive gratifications, which lessen it; and intoxicating substances, which make us insensitive to it. Something of this kind is indispensable.

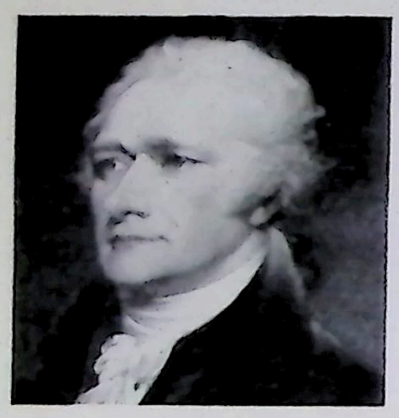
ALL three *Federalist* collaborators, in addition to their wide practical experience, were men of high intellectual culture. Alexander Hamilton, although only 30 years old and an immigrant, was the natural leader for the New York supporters of the new Constitution, and took a prominent part in the events that finally resulted in the Constitutional Convention. James Madison, a delegate to the Continental Congress, was active in promoting the developments that led to the Constitutional Convention and devoted his efforts to preparing for the establishment of a new government. John Jay, who was considered as second only to Washington in service to his country, served on the Continental Congress from its inception in 1774 and was later its president.



JOHN JAY *1745-1829*

God governs the world, and we have only to do our duty wisely, and leave the issue to him.

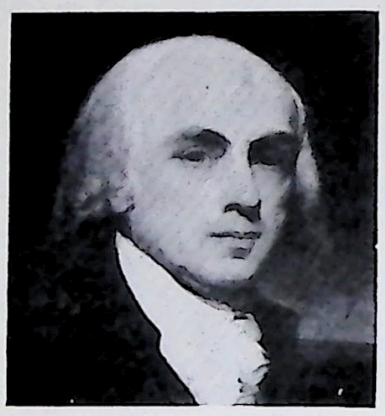
John Jay



ALEXANDER HAMILTON *1757-1804*

All the genius I have lies just in this: When I have a subject in hand, I study it profoundly. Day and night it is before me. I explore it in all its bearings; my mind becomes pervaded with it. Then the effort which I make the people are pleased to call the fruit of genius. It is the fruit of labor and thought.

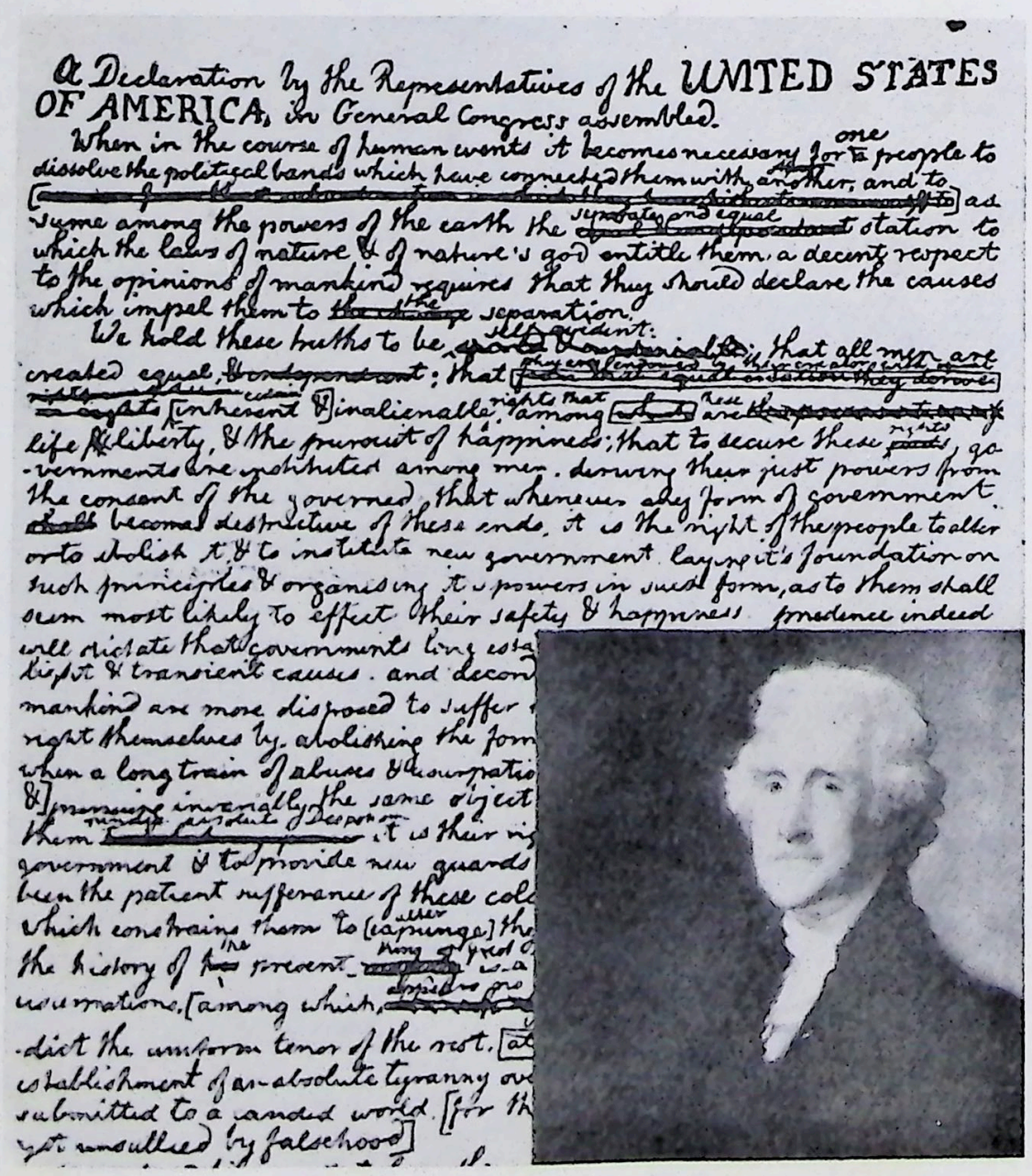
Alexander Hamilton



JAMES MADISON *1751-1836*

It is of great importance in a republic not only to guard the society against the oppression of its rulers, but to guard one part of the society against the injustice of the other part.

James Madison.



A Declaration by the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in General Congress assembled.

When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature & of nature's god entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with inherent & inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, & the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, & to institute new government, lay it's foundation on such principles & organising it's powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety & happiness. prudence indeed will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light & transient causes. and accordingly all experience hath shewn that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. but when a long train of abuses & usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government & to provide new guards for their future security. such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. the history of the present king of great britain is a history of repeated injuries & usurpations, among which, no one fact stands single or solitary to contradict the uniform tenor of the rest, all of which have in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. to prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world. [for the truth of which we pledge a faith yet unsullied by falsehood.]

THOMAS JEFFERSON *1743-1826*

Th. Jefferson

The Declaration of Independence was drafted by Thomas Jefferson "without reference to book or pamphlet."

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